

# Friendship in Medieval Iberia

Historical, Legal and  
Literary Perspectives

Antonella  
Liuzzo Scorpo



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# FRIENDSHIP IN MEDIEVAL IBERIA

*To my grandfather, Federico*

# Friendship in Medieval Iberia

Historical, Legal and Literary Perspectives

ANTONELLA LIUZZO SCORPO

*University of Lincoln, UK*

ASHGATE

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Published by

Ashgate Publishing Limited

Wey Court East

Union Road

Farnham

Surrey, GU9 7PT

England

Ashgate Publishing Company

110 Cherry Street

Suite 3-1

Burlington, VT 05401-3818

USA

[www.ashgate.com](http://www.ashgate.com)

### **British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

### **The Library of Congress has cataloged the printed edition as follows:**

Scorpo, Antonella Liuzzo.

Friendship in medieval Iberia : historical, legal, and literary perspectives / by Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4724-1202-7 (hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 978-1-4724-1203-4 (ebook) -- ISBN 978-1-4724-1204-1 (epub) 1. Friendship. 2. Friendship--Iberian Peninsula--History--To 1500. 3. Alfonso X, King of Castile and Leon, 1221-1284. 4. Friendship--Religious aspects. I. Title.

BJ1533.F8S37 2014

177'.620941--dc23

2014012047

ISBN: 978-1-4724-1202-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-4724-1203-4 (ebk – PDF)

ISBN: 978-1-4724-1204-1 (ebk \_ ePUB)

# Contents

|                                                                                |            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <i>Preface and Acknowledgements</i>                                            | <i>vii</i> |
| <i>List of Abbreviations</i>                                                   | <i>ix</i>  |
| <b>Introduction</b>                                                            | <b>1</b>   |
| <b>1 A History of Friendship: Classical and Medieval Perspectives</b>          | <b>9</b>   |
| Historiographical Debates                                                      | 9          |
| Philosophical Interpretations of Friendship                                    | 11         |
| Friendships in Medieval Europe: Typologies and Enactments                      | 21         |
| Friendship in Medieval Iberia                                                  | 28         |
| Friendship in the Pre-Alfonsine Literary Production                            | 30         |
| Other Pre-Alfonsine Categorizations: An Overview                               | 36         |
| <b>2 Friendship in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile</b>                       | <b>41</b>  |
| The Portrait of an <i>Ante Litteram</i> Ruler                                  | 41         |
| The <i>Siete Partidas</i>                                                      | 68         |
| A Legal and Moral Treatise: Friendship in Book IV of the <i>Siete Partidas</i> | 70         |
| <b>3 Spiritual and Religious Friendships</b>                                   | <b>81</b>  |
| A Link between the Secular and the Spiritual Worlds                            | 81         |
| Religious Friendship: A Definition                                             | 88         |
| Friendships within the Cloister: Monastic Charity and Personal Connections     | 89         |
| Outside the Cloister: Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and the Secular Clergy          | 94         |
| The Church and the Wider World: Clergymen and Believers                        | 98         |
| Religious and Secular Chains: Between Friendly and Vassalic Bonds              | 102        |
| A Case of Religious and Political Friendship:                                  |            |
| The Military Orders                                                            | 104        |
| Alfonso X and the Military Orders                                              | 108        |

|          |                                                                                  |            |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Political Friendships</b>                                                     | <b>111</b> |
|          | Ancient and Modern Interpretations                                               | 111        |
|          | Political Friendships in the Alfonsine Works                                     | 113        |
|          | Rules of Political Friendship: Loyalty and Betrayal                              | 120        |
|          | Pragmatic and Moral Motivations                                                  | 124        |
|          | The Inheritance of Friendship and Enmity                                         | 126        |
|          | Unequal Friendships: The Case of Vassalic Relationships                          | 128        |
|          | Gestures and Rituals: The Symbolic Value of Marriage                             | 134        |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Pragmatic Alliances and Interfaith Relationships</b>                          | <b>139</b> |
|          | Beyond Devotional Labels                                                         | 139        |
|          | Christian and Muslim Elites: The King as a Friend and the<br>Friends of the King | 145        |
|          | An Emblematic Case Study: El Cid of the <i>Estoria de España</i>                 | 148        |
|          | Muslims, Jews and Christians: What Kinds of Friendships<br>Were Possible?        | 160        |
|          | The Case of the Heretics and Other Christian Enemies                             | 173        |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Friendship, Sex and Gender Relationships</b>                                  | <b>177</b> |
|          | Multiple Definitions of <i>Amigo</i>                                             | 177        |
|          | Female–Male Connections in Law, Literature and History                           | 179        |
|          | Friendships between Women                                                        | 184        |
|          | Friendship and Sexual Relationships: A Question of Lexicon                       | 186        |
|          | Other Friendships: The Case of Tutors                                            | 191        |
|          | Friendship and Companionship: Lexical Similarities and<br>Practical Differences  | 193        |
|          | <b>Conclusion</b>                                                                | <b>199</b> |
|          | <i>Bibliography</i>                                                              | 205        |
|          | <i>Manuscript Sources</i>                                                        | 205        |
|          | <i>Printed Sources</i>                                                           | 205        |
|          | <i>Secondary Sources</i>                                                         | 210        |
|          | <i>Index</i>                                                                     | 241        |



# Preface and Acknowledgements

I like to think of this book as a key piece in the reconstruction and interpretation of the complex interdisciplinary mosaic which is the history of friendship in the Middle Ages. My focus is on thirteenth-century Iberia, an extremely significant and yet understudied area, as far as this field is concerned. Iberia was the crossroad of different peoples and civilizations and its rulers frequently adapted, manipulated and strategically used private and public relationships and emotions to strengthen ideas of power and authority, as well as to keep moral and social control. My interest in this field goes back to the years spent on my doctoral research project, for which I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to Professor Simon Barton, for guiding, advising and encouraging me throughout these years of study. He supported me as an excellent academic supervisor and as a model of friend and advisor, just like the examples that I analysed in my study. I also owe my gratitude to Professor David Hook, Professor Emma Cayley and Dr Fernando Luís Corral for their academic and personal support. Special thanks go to my dear friends and colleagues Dr Andrew B. Elliott, who has followed all the steps of this project until its completion; to Dr Nicola Pizzolato, Dr Christine Grandy and Dr Jamie Wood, who very kindly read parts of this manuscript and provided valuable advice. I am also in debt to my friends and colleagues from the Universities of Exeter, Queen Mary and Lincoln for their encouragement and feedback provided at different stages of this project. I would also like to thank the reviewers of this book for their precious suggestions on how to improve the original draft of my manuscript. I am deeply grateful to my parents, Salvatore and Marianna, my sisters, Federica and Marinella, and my grandparents for reminding me constantly to look beyond daily hardships and to believe in the power of passion and dreams. Last but not least, my gratitude is for Abigail, Aldo, Alex, Cecile, Daniele, Fran, Jose, Katharina, Sara, Silvia, Victoria, Walter, and all my friends who have been at my side with their kindness and affection even if most of them are far away.

**Note to the Text**

English translations of the *Cantigas de Santa María* are from the *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa María*, edited by Kathleen Kulp-Hill, and of the *Siete Partidas* from the translation by Samuel Parsons Scott, edited by Robert I. Burns. Unless otherwise stated, all other translations, and in particular those from the *Estoria de España*, are my own. Additionally, some editorial corrections were made when and where it was considered appropriate. Due to the multiple editions of some of the key works examined in this study (as presented in detail in Chapter 2), references include chapter numbers for the chronicles; book and title numbers for the laws; and miracle numbers for the *cantigas*. Page numbers are omitted, as they varied according to the different editions or translations of the same works.

# List of Abbreviations

|             |                                                                                  |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>AHDE</i> | <i>Anuario de Historia del Derecho Español</i> , Madrid                          |
| <i>CSM</i>  | <i>Cantigas de Santa María</i>                                                   |
| <i>CVR</i>  | <i>Crónica de veinte reyes</i>                                                   |
| <i>EE</i>   | <i>Estoria de España</i>                                                         |
| <i>GE</i>   | <i>General Estoria</i>                                                           |
| <i>HR</i>   | <i>Historia Roderici</i>                                                         |
| <i>PCG</i>  | <i>Primera Crónica General de España</i>                                         |
| <i>PMC</i>  | <i>Poema de Mio Cid</i>                                                          |
| <i>PMLA</i> | <i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i> ,<br>Baltimore |
| <i>SP</i>   | <i>Siete Partidas</i>                                                            |

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# Introduction

Amicitia en latín tanto quiere decir en romance como amistad, y amistad, según dijo Aristóteles, es una virtud que es muy buena en sí y provechosa a la vida de los hombres; y tiene lugar propiamente cuando aquel que ama es amado del otro a quien ama, pues de otra manera no sería amistad verdadera; y por ello dijo que diferencia grande hay entre amistad y amor y bienquerencia y concordia.<sup>1</sup>

[*Amicitia*, in Latin, means friendship in Castilian, and friendship, according to Aristotle, is a virtue which is intrinsically good in itself and profitable to human life and that, properly speaking, it arises when one person who loves another is beloved by him, for, under other circumstances, true friendship could not exist; and therefore he stated that there is a great difference between friendship, love, benevolence and concord.]

The definition of friendship given above, which reads like a moral statement extrapolated from a didactic manual is, perhaps surprisingly, an extract from the *Siete Partidas*, a thirteenth-century law code designed to regulate all aspects of Castilian subjects' public and personal lives.<sup>2</sup> Even more interesting, perhaps, is that despite his claimed *potestas condendi leges*, the king himself was not exempt from obeying those rules. I found the presence of specific laws on friendship in a legal *corpus* fascinating and remarkably unusual, and this inspired me to embark on this exciting project to explore the wide range of meanings attributed to friendship in the medieval period, particularly in the Iberian context. My leading research questions were: what types of relationships and networks were defined and regulated as friendships; to whom their rules applied; whether and to what extent those norms reflected what occurred in reality (at least according to medieval contemporary sources); and whether ideas and interpretations of

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<sup>1</sup> *Las siete partidas del Rey don Alfonso el Sabio: cotejadas con varios codices antiguos por la Real Academia de la Historia* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1807), Book IV, title XXVII, law I. For an English translation see Alfonso X, *The Siete Partidas*, ed. Robert I. Burns, trans. Samuel Parsons Scott (5 vols, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), vol. 4, p. 1003.

<sup>2</sup> More details on the *Siete Partidas* and on this title on friendship in Chapter 2, pp. 68–80.

amicable relationships shaped, or were shaped by, literary *topoi* and rhetorical models inherited from both Mediterranean and Central European traditions.

Friendship is a complex, multifaceted and nuanced subject, with specific characteristics which make it different, although strictly related to, love, benevolence and concord, as stated by the aforementioned law. Such a plethora of meanings and interpretations are still at the core of scholarly debates within and across different research fields, including historical and literary studies, sociology and anthropology.<sup>3</sup> An interesting case is how, today, the language of friendship applies to different types of relationships established or consolidated via social media.<sup>4</sup> The latter intertwine professional and leisure-based networks and their members interact virtually with 'friends', 'followers' and 'contacts', among others. Despite the undeniable differences, to some extent pre-modern communication shares similarities with our twenty-first century virtual networks. In the Middle Ages interpersonal relationships – in particular those named as friendships – were based on a shared sense of belonging to the same community, professional or ethnic groups, as well as on bonds generated by interests of different types. Moreover, forms of communication such as epistolary exchanges connected individuals who might not know each other in person and, yet, they addressed each other as friends, which was in most cases a rhetorical device used with broader social and political implications.<sup>5</sup>

Recent scholarship on friendship in the Middle Ages presents some interesting views, although most of those studies focus on French, Italian and German examples, while far less attention has been dedicated to other areas, which were commonly regarded as the far-end frontiers of the known world.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview John Scott, *Social Network Analysis: A Handbook*, 2nd edn (London: SAGE Publications, 2000); Julian Haseldine, 'Friendship Networks in Medieval Europe: New Models of a Political Relationship', *Amity: The Journal of Friendship Studies*, 1 (2013): pp. 69–88.

<sup>4</sup> Marika Lüders, 'Becoming More Like Friends: A Qualitative Study of Personal Media and Social Life', *Nordic Review*, 30: 1 (2009): pp. 201–16.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Courtney DeMayo, 'Ciceronian *Amicitia* in the Letters of Gerbert of Aurillac', *Viator*, 38 (2007): pp. 319–38; Holle M. Canatella, 'Friendship in Anselm of Canterbury's Correspondence: Ideals and Experience', *Viator*, 38 (2007): pp. 351–68; Constant J. Mews, 'Cicero and the Boundaries of Friendship in the Twelfth Century', *Viator*, 38 (2007): pp. 369–84; Cary J. Nederman, 'Friendship in Public Life during the Twelfth Century: Theory and Practice in the Writings of John of Salisbury', *Viator*, 38 (2007): pp. 385–97.

<sup>6</sup> Reginald Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature* (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1994); *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Julian Haseldine (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999); *Friendship in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age*, ed. Marilyn Sandidge and Albrecht Classen (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2010). The latter includes one chapter on Iberia:

Among the major absentees there is Iberia, a fascinating and yet underexplored area as far as this subject is concerned. As María Isabel Alfonso suggested:

Nadie, que yo sepa, ha emprendido la tarea de estudiar esta institución en España detenidamente y en todos los múltiples aspectos con que aparece en nuestros documentos medievales. Pienso que su estudio sería labor interesante no sólo como aportación a la Historia de las Instituciones sino también a la Historia de las mentalidades, dado que la ‘amicitia’ es fundamentalmente un modo de entender y plantearse las relaciones sociales en conexión, claro está, con el desenvolvimiento de determinadas formas económicas.<sup>7</sup>

[Nobody, as far as I know, has ever studied this institution in Spain either in detail or considering the multiple aspects which appear in our medieval documents. I believe that not only will this study be interesting for the History of the Institutions, but also for the History of mentality, since friendship is a way of planning and understanding social relationships in connection with, obviously, the development of certain economic structures.]

More than 40 years later, only Carlos Heusch and Marilyn Stone dedicated some attention to friendship in medieval Iberia, although at the core of their studies there was only one source: the aforementioned *Siete Partidas*.<sup>8</sup>

With these considerations in mind, I decided to focus my attention on the vibrant thirteenth-century period, conventionally labelled as the Peninsular ‘Renaissance’ for the splendour and advance achieved in different fields, including a renewed interest in both the representation and regulation of different types of social exchanges. This is also regarded as one of the most prolific periods in Spanish history in terms of both artistic and literary achievements, such as those undertaken under the patronage of its *ante litteram* and enlightened ruler: Alfonso X of Castile, later named ‘the Wise’ and ‘the Learned’. Classical philosophy, medicine, astronomy and even astral magic were some of the subjects

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Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, ‘Spiritual Friendship in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile: Images of Interaction between the Sacred and Spiritual Worlds of Thirteenth-Century Iberia’, in Sandidge and Classen, *Friendship in the Middle Ages*, pp. 445–77.

<sup>7</sup> María Isabel Alfonso, ‘Sobre la “amicitia” en la España medieval’, *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 170 (Madrid, 1973): pp. 379–86.

<sup>8</sup> Carlos Heusch, ‘Les fondements juridiques de l’amitié à travers les Partidas d’Alphonse X et le droit médiéval’, *Cahiers de Linguistique Hispanique Médiévale*, 18–19 (1993–94): pp. 6–48; Marilyn Stone, *Marriage and Friendship in Medieval Spain: Social Relations According to the Fourth Partida of Alfonso X* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990).

which were made available in vernacular translations through the works produced in his scriptorium. He also supported the process of linguistic, administrative and – although highly debateable – political unification of his kingdom, sowing the seeds of a developing proto-national identity. Alfonso X was also one of the leaders of the Christian ‘Reconquest’ of the Southern part of the Peninsula still under Muslim control, although he experienced problematic, and in most cases unsuccessful, situations, among which his claim of the imperial title (*fecho del imperio*) and the failed conquest of Northern Africa (*fecho de allende*).<sup>9</sup>

At the core of my study there are three encyclopaedic collections produced in the Alfonsine scriptorium and chancery, true gems of artistic and aesthetic splendour, which offer a comparative overview of thirteenth-century ideas, interpretations and representations of friendship. Namely, the sevenfold legislative code of the *Siete Partidas*, regulating any aspects of life concerning all subjects; the chronicles of the *Estoria de España*, which narrate events of the history of Spain from its origins up to the reign of Ferdinand III (r.1217–52), Alfonso X’s father; and the *Cantigas de Santa María*, a collection of poems, enhanced with musical annotations and miniatures, displaying the miracles performed by the Virgin Mary, which also provides an insight into different devotional experiences within the complex ethnic and social panorama of medieval Iberia. The first two *compendia* were composed in the main vernacular of Castile (although regional variants are recognizable), while the Marian songs were written in Galician-Portuguese, which has been frequently referred to as the language of poetry *per antonomasia*, although the recent discovery of a parchment containing extracts from the *Siete Partidas* translated into Galician-Portuguese might suggest a much wider use of this language for multiple purposes.<sup>10</sup>

Social, legal, political, religious, ethnic and personal aspects were at stake – some of them simultaneously, some excluding each other – in shaping the multifarious meanings and typologies of friendship. Nonetheless, it is important to remember, as Duby remarked upon, that ‘our sources of information reflect reality to a certain extent, but all or nearly all of them were inevitably written at some distance from this reality.’<sup>11</sup> In the case of the Alfonsine production, despite the fact that it was regarded as the product of privileged and separated circles – the royal chancery and scriptorium – it is highly significant because

<sup>9</sup> More details on Alfonso X’s life and political career in Chapter 2. See also Carlos Estepa, ‘Alfonso X y el “fecho del imperio”’, *Revista de Occidente*, 37 (1984): pp. 43–54.

<sup>10</sup> For details on each of these works see Chapter 2.

<sup>11</sup> Georges Duby, *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), see in particular chapter ‘Towards a History of Woman in France and Spain’, pp. 95–101, at p. 100.



it also presents a wide range of aspects and features depicting the lives and customs of the lowest subjects. Therefore, reading the Alfonsine works is like peering into thirteenth-century life through a two-way mirror, which gives access to both the highest and the lowest ways of establishing and maintaining friendships. Through the enlightened didactic norms and moral rules promoted in his literary, historical and legal production Alfonso X explicitly declared his desire to be respected and loved as a friend by all his subjects. However, it was his superior status which, in most cases, made such an instance very difficult to occur in reality.

Last but not least, these Alfonsine collections were imbued with elements from different times and traditions, which had converged into the bosom of the Peninsula.<sup>12</sup> Considering all this, another question which arises is to what extent were those contents originally and fully Alfonsine or were they rather the echoes of some Arabic chroniclers' voices (such as Ibn Alqama's) or the Roman jurists' sentences, which were translated and manipulated to fit this thirteenth-century royal production. Undeniably, there are clear points of coincidence, but there are as many, and even more, which are peculiarly Alfonsine. And with regard to these peculiarities, the lexicon of *amicitia* occupies a significant position. As Esther Pascua suggested, in official treaties of peace between kings as they appear in pre-vernacular sources, a whole range of words such as *fides*, *amor*, *placitum*, *convenientia*, *concordia*, *pax*, *securitas* and of course *amicitia*, were used 'in the attempt to exhaust the rich world of personal relations of medieval society'.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, in the Alfonsine vernacular works, different terms, such as *amigo* or *compañero*, defined relationships as being conceptually different, even if sometimes coincident in practice.<sup>14</sup>

The parameters adopted to define the categories which appear in the Alfonsine works are numerous, and they include the typologies of the parties involved, their peculiarities – gender, age, position and social status – and the situations which led to the tightening of their amity bonds. All of these ingredients, mixed together in different quantities and qualities, generated the several varieties of friendship examined in this study. Interestingly, modern sociological and anthropological definitions do not seem to differ radically from

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<sup>12</sup> On intertextuality and intersubjectivity see, for example, *Essays in Semiotics= Essais de sémiotique*, ed. Julia Kristeva, Josette Rey-Debove and Donna Jean Umiker (The Hague: Mouton, 1971).

<sup>13</sup> Esther Pascua, 'Peace among Equals: War and Treaties in Twelfth-Century Europe', in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. Philip de Souza and John France (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 193–210, at p. 194.

<sup>14</sup> *Amigo* (friend) and *compañero* (companion).

such medieval perceptions of what friendship was, how it should be established and through which means it should be preserved. For example, the sociologist Allan's argument that '[N]ot only do our friends help to provide us with our sense of identity, but they also confirm our social worth'<sup>15</sup> recalls classical Greek ideas, very familiar to the medieval tradition, according to which friendship was both a personal and political link, beneficial and profitable in different spheres of human life.

How and to what extent are medieval representations of friendship the legacy of such a classical tradition, while paving the way to more nuanced, formulaic and multi-layered definitions of social, political, personal and perhaps emotional bonds? In order to answer these questions and present an overview of the changes experienced in the forms of establishing and interpreting *amicitia*, Chapter 1 maps out a history of friendship, from its classical philosophical definitions as *philia* and political connections between fellow citizens, to its medieval reinterpretations across Europe. Chapter 2 outlines the particular situation of Iberia during the reign of Alfonso X of Castile (r.1252–84) and discusses how his political and cultural projects reflected or embodied wider trends of change and continuity. A more detailed analysis of each individual collection is also provided to contextualize the thematic approach adopted in the following chapters, each dedicated to different categories of friendship. Chapter 3, for instance, presents spiritual and religious friendships. The latter recalls part of the characteristics of the spiritual connections, but only to secularize them, as it is evident from the analysis of the relationships established by clergymen either within or outside the cloister, as well as those between them and their believers. In Chapter 4, concerning relationships established within the secular spheres, special attention is dedicated to political friendships, the rules of which affected military armistices and diplomatic affairs, among other pacts. Following the same line of thought, and considering the multicultural and multi-ethnic environment in which Alfonso X operated, Chapter 5 deals with interfaith relationships, including the pragmatic alliances signed between Christian rulers and Muslim leaders. A thought-provoking case study is that of a figure who later became the Spanish national hero, El Cid *Campeador*, as presented in the *Estoria de España*. The Alfonsine chronicle presents the self-made ruler of Valencia as the master of his own destiny, who skilfully managed to strengthen personal, political and vassalic networks with both Christian and Muslim lords. Whether

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<sup>15</sup> Graham Allan, *Friendship: Developing a Sociological Perspective* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989). See also Liz Spencer and Raymond Edward Pahl, *Rethinking Friendship: Hidden Solidarities Today* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

it was a sense of vassalic duty or, more probably, a matter of mere convenience which motivated El Cid to establish such relationships, yet some of the key features conventionally attributed to friendship appear. To conclude, Chapter 6 deals with typologies of relationships which were catalogued as unconventional and in which the individuals involved were regarded as 'others' for their gender and positions, as much as they were (as demonstrated in the previous chapter) for their ethnic and religious backgrounds. Amorous and sexual connections, relationships with and between women, as well as cases of tutorship and companionship, are some of the examples which fall within this last category.

This journey into thirteenth-century Iberia, through the works of one of its most celebrated kings and patrons, Alfonso X, will provide an insight into what friendship meant in different entourages, while discovering characteristics which were strictly connected to contemporary historical contingencies, as well as envisaging elements which might be applicable to universal human experiences. Due to its interdisciplinary nature, this study touches upon a number of tangential, and sometimes overlapping, research fields such as cultural history, philosophy, literary studies and the history of emotions, among others. Yet, this is an intriguing subject still open to multiple interpretations, most of which are impossible to disentangle from ideas of personal and group identities; community; social and political networks; pragmatic needs of different kind; as well as from definitions and display of private and public emotions in medieval daily lives. Further research in this area is required and I believe that this study is a step to move forward in this direction.

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# Chapter 1

## A History of Friendship: Classical and Medieval Perspectives

### Historiographical Debates

Friendship has always been central in virtually all cultures and in all periods, for both the personal and social lives of those involved. Over the centuries, the idea of *amicitia* underwent a pattern of transformation and adaptation in both social and emotional contexts, which has never fully crystallized in a singular and exclusive definition. In fact, as an anthropological, philosophical, social and political concept, friendship has a very long history but quite a short historiography.<sup>1</sup> Apart from a few exceptions, until the 1980s research had been focused predominantly on the interpretations attributed to the classical authorities.<sup>2</sup> By contrast, since the 1990s an increased number of studies have centred on its social value and the way it affected public life from the Middle Ages onwards.<sup>3</sup> Remarkable importance was assigned to the fact that, according to the medieval perception, friendship was not restricted to exclusively civic and political fields, in which most of the ancient Greek philosophers had placed it, but instead, filtered through a predominant Christian mentality, it

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<sup>1</sup> Preston T. King and Heather Devere, *The Challenge to Friendship in Modernity* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2000); Irving Singer, *The Nature of Love: Plato to Luther* (New York: Random House, 1966; repr. London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984–87); Horst Hutter, *Politics as Friendship: The Origins of Classical Notions of Politics in the Theory and Practice of Friendship* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> Robert Flacelière, *Love in Ancient Greece*, trans. J. Cleugh (London: Crown Publishers, 1962); Jean Leclercq, 'L'amitié dans les lettres au Moyen Age', *Revue du Moyen Age Latin*, 1 (1945): pp. 391–410; Ludovic Dugas, *L'amitié antique* (Paris: Alcan, 1894).

<sup>3</sup> Gerd Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers: The Political Importance of Group Bonds in the Early Middle Ages*, trans. C. Carroll (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, ed. J. Haseldine (Sutton: Stroud, 1999); Reginald Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature* (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1994); *The Olde Daunce: Love, Friendship, Sex and Marriage in the Medieval World*, R. Edwards and S. Spector (eds) (Albany: State University of New York, 1991).

went as far as to include the spiritual connections between fellow citizens, as well as those between men and the supernatural. Inevitably, the assumption that *amicitia* was, and still is, an extremely complex issue which affects several spheres of human life, has reinvigorated interdisciplinary studies in this area. A closer look at both historical and documentary sources such as charters, juridical works, parish registers, commemorative texts (*libri vitae* and necrology), as well as literary works of various genres contributes to our understanding of what conventional forms and rituals regulated those connections. The study of these sources from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives has also helped explain how friendship was viewed and experienced by contemporaries and how its perception was adapted to, or modified within, different cultural and geographical contexts.

In medieval sources, the range of emotions concerning the establishment or breaking of any amicable relationships were already defined either as part of the biological framework of the individuals involved or as a direct consequence of the constraints that society imposed on them. Social status, gender, religious and ethnic factors were all at stake when trying to define what friendship was, could or should be. With this in mind, the need outlined by Turner for an integrative theory in sociology, which does not exclude any methodological approach when considering a history of emotions, finds solid ground in the fact that complementary, and sometimes conflictive, definitions of friendship appear already in classical and medieval sources.<sup>4</sup> To what extent was friendship an emotional bond stimulated by biological or neurological inputs rather than the result of pragmatic agreements dictated by a cognitive process? Was it a social construction, which evolved in time and differed in places? Previous studies exploring some of these questions have been hampered by the Stearns' view that it would be impossible to explore the 'emotionology' of the Middle Ages because of the lack of adequate sources that would witness the experience of the lower strata.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, even if it would be nearly impossible to distinguish with any certainty between what medieval people genuinely felt and what was an ideal construction shaped by *topoi*, inspired by, or filtered through, works produced either by or for an elite, this kind of approach is highly valuable to throw new light on how directly or indirectly those ideas affected the representation of both personal and collective spheres of human interaction.

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<sup>4</sup> Jonathan H. Turner, 'The Sociology of Emotions: Basic Theoretical Arguments', *Emotion Review*, 1 (2009): pp. 340–54.

<sup>5</sup> Carol Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *The American Historical Review*, 90 (1985): pp. 813–36.

The variety of sources available for the medieval period demonstrates the presence of multiple emotional communities coexisting in social life, as Barbara Rosenwein argued.<sup>6</sup> Within this context, the less frequently studied emotional panorama concerning the Western Mediterranean, and medieval Iberia particularly, will provide a new and original perspective on this subject. As Reddy suggested, when discussing potential methodological approaches:

to expand research in this direction would be to move beyond concern with the 'self' and 'emotions', as these terms have been historically defined in a Western context, in order to examine the shaping, across history, of the extremely plastic and powerful 'pattern recognition' capabilities of the brain/mind. These capabilities include emotion (understood as an aspect of cognition), perception, self-presentation; sensitivity to art and design, to ritual, to the body; and much more. Only a multi-disciplinary effort can show the way forward.<sup>7</sup>

This chapter will map out some of the key stages in the history of friendship from its classical philosophical definitions to the medieval reinterpretations that emerged across Europe. This constitutes a fundamental premise and a useful analytical tool to detect common ideas and patterns of behaviour, which will serve as comparative parameters to identify the peculiarities of the Iberian context.

## Philosophical Interpretations of Friendship

### *Classical Perspectives*

In order to discuss the origins and development of the idea of friendship through the ages, one can neither omit nor ignore its illustrious and influential Hellenic origins, according to which friendship included political allies, *xenoi* (foreign collaborators), individuals linked by blood ties and by marital bonds.<sup>8</sup> In Greek

<sup>6</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006); Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *The American Historical Review*, 107 (2002): pp. 921–45.

<sup>7</sup> William M. Reddy, 'Historical Research on the Self and Emotions', *Emotions Review*, 1 (2009): pp. 302–15, at p. 312.

<sup>8</sup> *Aspects of Friendship in the Greco-Roman World: Proceedings of a Conference Held at the Seminar Für Alte Geschichte, Heidelberg, on 10–11th June, 2000*, ed. M. Peachin (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, 2001); *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings*, ed. B. Inwood and L.P. Gerson, 2nd edn (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1997); David Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

and subsequently in Roman societies, those relationships were also imbued with emotional factors and bolstered by affection and generosity. In Konstan's words, both those historical contexts 'did produce a space for sympathy and altruism under the name of friendship that stands as an alternative to structured forms of interaction based on kinship, civic identity, or commercial activity'.<sup>9</sup> Paul Miller rejected such a view, arguing instead that Homeric friendship resembled more a system of calculated cooperation, without any necessary affection.<sup>10</sup> This debate has been complicated further by the philological analysis of the available sources, which proved that in Homeric Greek the term *philos* (φίλος), despite its different nuances, was generally adopted as an adjectival form, with the meaning of 'dear', rather than as an appellation indicating a friend.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, familial affection, companionship and *eros* (passionate love) were frequently assimilated into the same generic label of *philia* (φιλία); a term which was adopted to define respectively love or friendship, and in some cases even both.

During the classical period (from the sixth-century democracy of the independent city-states to Alexander the Great's demise in 323 BC) the Greek peninsula experienced an exceptional growth of male amity bonds, which constituted the bases of public life. It was commonly believed that nature had endowed human beings with associative skills, which the democratic civic participation in the *polis* (city-state) contributed to bring together on a regular basis. Nevertheless, friendship acquired such a name only when the involved parties exchanged mutual help and solidarity in difficult situations.<sup>12</sup> Loyalty and goodwill, in fact, were the pillars on which both friendly and political associations were built. This also implied that, although familial ties might be regarded as incentives to forge solid friendships, the latter were not assured solely by consanguinity.

The experience of the Pythagorean brotherhoods (from the sixth century BC) merits attention. 'What belongs to friends [is held in] common':<sup>13</sup> the individuals

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1997); David Konstan, 'Greek Friendship', *The American Journal of Philology*, 117 (1996): pp. 71–94; Anthony Arthur Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd edn (London: Duckworth, 1986).

<sup>9</sup> Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, pp. 5–6.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Millett, *Lending and Borrowing in Ancient Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 120–21.

<sup>11</sup> Gabriel Herman, *Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 38; Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, pp. 28–31.

<sup>12</sup> Lynette G. Mitchell, *Greeks Bearing Gifts: The Public Use of Private Relationships in the Greek World, 435–323 BC* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>13</sup> Christoph Riedweg, *Pythagoras: His Life, Teaching, and Influence*, trans. Steven Rendall with Christoph Riedweg and Andreas Schatzmann (Ithaca and London: Cornell



belonging to such associations believed that Pythagoras (c.580/572 BC–500/490 BC) himself had pronounced those words. In fact, they shared their lives and material possessions. Moreover, in their assumption, the creation of a community (κοινωνία) was based on the mathematical equality of the individuals involved, and it should include no outsiders but the initiated members of their sect. Those chosen few had to prove their reliability in order to be trusted and to gain the honorific title of friends. For the Pythagoreans, friendship represented the keystone of an ethical life since it induced the involved parties to acquire and share both virtues and goods, spontaneously.

Subsequently, Epicurus (c.341–70 BC) distinguished between the meanings of *philoī* (friends) and *philia* (friendship), adopting the former to define individuals who needed a close connection with someone who could be useful for them; while the latter was regarded as the purest and uncorrupted form of human support for which all individuals yearned. Epicurus believed that the need for human association was not an original feeling, but it had been generated piecemeal, once individuals found themselves increasingly more bound to each other within a stratified social frame.<sup>14</sup> What was innovative in his thought was that he proposed to abandon the urban setting in which friendship had been conventionally rooted, and he rather opted for an idealized peaceful countryside, which would allow even women and children, usually excluded from public and civic events, to enjoy a communitarian life based on empathy and emotions. In the Epicurean conception, friendship represented a form of wisdom in practice, as well as an instrument to achieve some relief from human suffering.<sup>15</sup>

Socrates (469–399 BC), instead, emphasized the educative value of friendship, which would support the process of self-knowledge and therefore pave the way to the acquisition of the truth. Socrates' idea was reiterated in Plato's (c.428–348 BC) dialogue *Lysis* in which Socrates played the role of one of the protagonists. In the tangled syllogisms which characterized the entire *colloquium* one cannot glimpse any unequivocal definition regarding the essence

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University Press, 2005), pp. 98–104, at p. 102.

<sup>14</sup> David K. O'Connor, 'The Invulnerable Pleasure of Epicurean Friendship', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 30 (1989): pp. 165–86.

<sup>15</sup> Eric Brown, 'Epicurus on the Value of Friendship (*Sententia Vaticana* 23)', *Classical Philology*, 97 (2002): pp. 68–80; David Konstan, 'Friendship from Epicurus to Philodemus', in *Epicureismo greco e romano: atti del congresso internazionale* (Napoli, 19–26 Maggio 1993), ed. Gabriele Giannantoni and Marcello Gigante (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1996), pp. 387–96; Julius Rocca, 'Epicurean Friendship', in *Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. Konstantine Boudouris, (2 vols, Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, 1993), vol. 2, pp. 193–204; John M. Rist, 'Epicurus on Friendship', *Classical Philology*, 75 (1980): pp. 121–29.

and practices of friendship, but the focus is on its position at the core of any educative love.<sup>16</sup>

Two other philosophical milestones proved fundamental to define friendship both in the classical Greek world and beyond it: the *Ethica Eudemea* and the *Ethica Nicomachea* by Aristotle (384–22 BC).<sup>17</sup> What emerges from these works is that *amicitia* was considered one of the most relevant bonds connecting people during their lives, comparable only with blood and family ties.<sup>18</sup> The idea of friendship as *philia* was related with that of *physis* (φύσις), that is to say nature, since man was considered to be naturally endowed with human generosity, which spontaneously compelled him to love others. Friendship was a necessity to the extent that no one, despite all the acquired material benefits and transient joys – which were providers of a merely material self-sufficiency – would have chosen to live without friends.<sup>19</sup> Such a statement was reinforced by the idea that a friend was ‘the other self’;<sup>20</sup> a physically autonomous individual connected to the other by sharing a single soul; an experience that would finally allow the harmonious balance between rationality and affection.<sup>21</sup> Aristotle accommodated all the potential outcomes of *philia* within a threefold analytical framework: the good, the useful and the pleasant. Among these three categories, only friendships that relied on the moral excellence of the individuals involved – the good – were destined to last forever, while the incidental connections depending on

<sup>16</sup> Anthony W. Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); David Bolotin, *Plato's Dialogue on Friendship: An Interpretation of the Lysis with a New Translation* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979); Julia Annas, ‘Plato and Aristotle on Friendship and Altruism’, *Mind*, 86 (1977): pp. 532–54.

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica Eudemea*, trans. Michael Woods, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); *Ethica Nicomachea*, trans. David Ross, rev. J.L. Ackrill and J.O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). Aristotle's works reached the Iberian context in 1240 when Herman el Alemán, who worked in the school of translation of Toledo, translated Averroes' commentary from Arabic into Latin (probably in the monastery of the Santísima Trinidad, as stated in the fifteenth-century *Itinerarium Hispanicum* by Jerónimo Monetarius: ‘de monasterio sancte Trinitatis ... in hoc loco traductus est liber ethicorum et addicio Averrois, ut in fine libri ethicorum Averrois scriptum est’). Hieronymus Münzer, *Itinerarium Hispanicum*, ed. Ludwig Pfandl, *Revue Hispanique*, 48 (1920): pp. 1–178, at p. 121. See also Lorraine Smith Pangle, *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Friendship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Paul Schollmeier, *Other Selves: Aristotle on Personal and Political Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

<sup>19</sup> Nancy Sherman, ‘Aristotle on Friendship and Shared Life’, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 47 (1987): pp. 589–613.

<sup>20</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, 1166a: 31; *Eth. Eud.*, 1245a: 30.

<sup>21</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, 1157b: 25–33, 1156b: 21, 1167a: 3–5, 19–20.

temporary utility would dissolve once the pragmatic reasons connecting the parties had been fulfilled or expired. The purest form of friendship was nothing but natural and sincere love, benevolence and *eunoia* (goodwill).<sup>22</sup>

Another relevant point emerging from the Aristotelian theory is the necessity of equality between the contractors: 'for when the love is in proportion to the merit of the parties, then in a sense there arises equality, which is certainly held to be characteristic of friendship'.<sup>23</sup> Aristotle also asserted that friendship consisted of loving others rather than being loved. In fact, the potentially unlimited human love was in itself the parameter which enabled the unequal to become equal.<sup>24</sup> In contrast to the *Ethics*, in which friendship is defined in terms of virtues – that is to say the ability to make and maintain friends, as well as to act for others' sake – in the *Rhetoric*, *philia* relies on the awareness of others' friendly attitudes. In other words, one could love another person only if the other was evidently ready to reciprocate that love:

Let 'loving' be for someone what one regards as goods, for his sake but not for their own, and being productive of these (goods) as far as one can. A friend is one who loves and is loved in return; and people think that they are friends when they think that their mutual relation is of this character.<sup>25</sup>

Aristotle also discussed the characteristics that individuals should possess in order to be considered friends, which features they should have in common and how many of them could claim such a role.<sup>26</sup> Like Plato, Aristotle also argued

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<sup>22</sup> Aristotle denied the existence of any form of disinterested friendship, since this would have justified the phenomenon of *autarkeia* (self-sufficiency) with the subsequent corollary according to which man would not need any amicable relationship. Aristotle also believed that both pure and utilitarian friendships were based on mutual benevolence.

<sup>23</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, VIII, 1158b: 27–29. See also Erik Kooper, 'Loving the Unequal Equal: Medieval Theologians and Martial Affection', in *The Olde Daunce*, Edwards and Spector, pp. 44–56.

<sup>24</sup> This concept was re-examined later in the light of the Christian perspective according to which people were considered equal for the love they gave and received from God.

<sup>25</sup> John Edwin Sandys (ed.), *The Rhetoric of Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1877), 138:1. Additionally, *philia* was regarded as the result of different processes aimed at persuading an audience; for example, an orator could stimulate feelings of friendship or hatred through his speech.

<sup>26</sup> Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1359b: 2–17. In the *Rhetoric* Aristotle listed all the characteristics that a man should possess in order to be regarded as a friend, which contingencies drove them together and which, instead, turned them into enemies. He also presented a sort of transitive rule of friendship according to which a friend's friend is one's own ally, as well as a friend's enemy is inevitably one's own foe.

that a friend should dedicate himself to love the other completely. Consequently, it would be impossible for one individual to please many at once. This appears as an explicit rejection of the idea of a universal friendship, since:

Those who are friends to many (*poluphiloi*) and treat everyone in an intimate manner do not seem friends to anyone, except in the political sense (*politikōs*); they also call them ingratiating (*areskoi*). Now, it is possible to be a friend to many in the political sense and not be ingratiating, but truly decent.<sup>27</sup>

Aristotle did not deny the possibility of establishing 'enhanced' friendships, though they could only exist in terms of *politikē philia* (civic friendship),<sup>28</sup> that is to say among virtuous citizens joined by *homónoia*, which is unanimity in actions performed for both the citizens' and the city's sake.<sup>29</sup>

A more general question which lies at the core of Aristotle's speculations is why do individuals need friends in the first place; which the philosopher answered by adopting a metaphysical approach: friendship found its reason of being in the broader context of *telos* (end), the final goal of human life. Everybody should love and emulate their virtuous friends, since they were 'the other selves'. Hence, those who observed their friends' actions and behaviours, were likely to grasp their own essences and to achieve a deeper self-knowledge, since others' lives acted as mirrors and spectacles of their own attitudes.<sup>30</sup>

The Aristotelian rejection of any model of universal friendship was overturned by the early Stoics, including Zeno (333–264 BC) and Chrysippus (c.280–207 BC).<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Seneca (4 BC–65 AD) believed that everything was part of a comprehensive *Logos* (Word) or *Pneuma* (Spirit), which included all human beings, who were considered detached branches, now separated from their original unity. Finally, in Seneca's opinion everything was interwoven by

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, 9.10, 1171: 15–19.

<sup>28</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, 1155a: 22–23. He also added the definition of *hetairikē philia* (comradely affection), which he depicted as a relationship similar to the connection existing between siblings.

<sup>29</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Eud.*, 1241a: 15–35; *Eth. Nic.*, 1167a: 11, 1167b: 15. On political friendships see also Chapter 4.

<sup>30</sup> Michael Pakaluk, *Other Selves: Philosophers on Friendship* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1991).

<sup>31</sup> The two thinkers believed that an ideal *polis* was made of wise men exclusively and Zeno also declared that 'in the Republic the good alone are true citizens, or friends, or kindred or free men', in Diogenes Laërtius, *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. C.D. Yonge (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1853), 7.33; quotation also cited in *Topics in Stoic Philosophy*, ed. Katerina Ierodiakonou (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 181.

an impersonal form of *amicitia*; therefore, no friend was regarded as unique and irreplaceable.<sup>32</sup>

### *Roman and Medieval Perspectives*

In the passage from Greek to Latin thought, an innovative perspective was introduced: *benevolentia* was no longer considered the seed of friendship, but the result of a long process of acquaintance, while *consensus* and unanimity – as the Stoics had already claimed – were regarded as the genesis of *amicitia*. According to Cicero (c.106–43 BC), who managed to synthesize the previous Aristotelian and Stoic conclusions on the subject, friendship was simultaneously a personal, universal and natural link. He argued that men retained a natural sociability and, therefore, the human search for amity was not generated by need or desire, but rather by the natural essence that pushed individuals to join those with whom they felt an affinity of virtues. To Cicero a friend continued to be ‘another self’ on an ontological level and their amity was revered as an everlasting chain, overcoming even death.<sup>33</sup>

Social and political changes inevitably influenced the ways of interpreting and forging interpersonal relationships. As a matter of fact, in the Roman Republic (509–27 BC) both the individuals with whom one could exchange mutual affection and benefits, as well as any political allies, were regarded as, and addressed with the appellation of, *amici*.<sup>34</sup> However, the deep-rooted patriotism of the republican citizens neither justified nor allowed any betrayal against the Republic, even if carried out in a friend’s name. In time, the idea of friendship transformed according to the altered social and political contingencies generated by the transition to the Empire. The imposed social stratification continued to allow relationships of friendship, but most of them were essentially forms of patronage provided by a wealthy lord (*patronus*) to those who claimed his protection (*clientes*).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Seneca, *Ad Lucilium epistulae morales*, ed. L.D. Reynolds (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), 9.5–6.

<sup>33</sup> Cicero, *Laelius de amicitia & Somnium Scipionis*, ed. and trans. J.G.F. Powell (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1990).

<sup>34</sup> Eleanor Dickey, *Latin Forms of Address from Plautus to Apuleius* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>35</sup> Karl Julius Holzkmeecht, *Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages* (London: Cass, 1966); Barbara K. Gold, *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Richard P. Seller, *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

With the advent of Christianity, the Fathers of the Church remodelled Cicero's idea of natural friendship and elaborated new theories aimed at providing a divine justification for the world and for nature.<sup>36</sup> St Ambrose (c.339–97), for instance, together with other Christian writers of the fourth and fifth centuries, rescued the Stoic point of view by adopting it as a philosophical bridge between the two classical concepts of *philia* and *agape*, respectively love between equals in virtues and undifferentiated love for all human creatures.<sup>37</sup> Ambrose stressed the importance of self-disclosure, exchanges of thoughts, desires and worries, which made of a friend 'the medicine of life, and the blessing of immortality'.<sup>38</sup> Recalling Seneca's and Cicero's ideas,<sup>39</sup> Ambrose also emphasized the necessity of honest speaking and confession among friends, but he circumscribed the accomplishment of such actions within the brethren. Admittedly, Greek ideas legitimately entered the Christian doctrine only after having been filtered through the Evangelic perception of *amicitia* as a form of generous love.<sup>40</sup> Following a similar line of thought, St Augustine of Hippo (354–430) wholly denied the possibility of experiencing perfect friendship among human beings, with the sole exception of the bonds forged in the name of God.<sup>41</sup>

Similar issues were readdressed in the sixth-century *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX* by Isidore of Seville (c.562–636), who defined a friend as a guardian of the soul and listed a series of fundamental features that any amicable relationship should possess. First, 'Illa uera est amicitia, quae nihil quaerit ex rebus amici, nisi solam beneuolentiam, scilicet ut gratis amet amantem'.<sup>42</sup> Second, Isidore argued that friendship was a fundamental complement of people's lives, since it was the connection which made them share their joys and pains with

<sup>36</sup> Philippe Delhay, *Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, trans. S.J. Tester (London: Burns & Oates, 1960).

<sup>37</sup> Mary Dorothea, 'Cicero and Saint Ambrose on Friendship', *The Classical Journal*, 43 (1948): pp. 219–22.

<sup>38</sup> *Ecclesiastes*, 6:16, in *Friendship in the Classical World*, Konstan, p. 150.

<sup>39</sup> Seneca, *Ep. mor.*, 3.2–3; Cicero, *De amicitia*, 22.

<sup>40</sup> Eoin G. Cassidy, 'He Who Has Friends Can Have No Friend: Classical and Christian Perspectives on the Limits to Friendship', in *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, Haseldine, pp. 45–67.

<sup>41</sup> Carolinne White, *Christian Friendship in the Fourth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Donald X. Burt, *Friendship and Society: An Introduction to Augustine's Practical Philosophy* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999); Marie Aquinas McNamara, *Friendship in Saint Augustine* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1964).

<sup>42</sup> A real friendship is when there is no claim of a friend's possessions, but only of benevolent and spontaneous love for the other. *Isidorus Hispalensis Sententiae*, ed. P. Cazier, Corpus Christianorum Serie Latina CXI (Turnholt: Brepols, 1998), III, 30.2b, p. 268.



others.<sup>43</sup> Isidore went further by issuing a series of warnings against the dangers which false friends might cause, as well as the difficulties faced in seeking to preserve friendship in time. Later on, during the Carolingian period, Hrabanus Maurus (784–856) in his *Commentaria in Ieremiam*, apart from re-stating Cicero's ideas on friendship, reiterated these same warnings against false friends, confirming the difficulty of choosing trustworthy companions.<sup>44</sup> However, it was only during the scholastic period of the eleventh and twelfth centuries that the debate on friendship flared up again; particularly with paramount Christian thinkers such as Anselm (c.1033–1109), who re-defined the meanings of friendship in his letters, and Aelred de Rievaulx (1110–67), who attempted to synthesize individual and universal ideas of friendship within the sphere of Divine love.<sup>45</sup>

A further reconciliation between human love and the Christian idea of divine charity was attempted by Thomas Aquinas (c.1225–74) who saw in the perfection supplied by grace a bridge between the two. Seeking a compromise with Aristotelian philosophy, Aquinas suggested that real friendship existed whenever someone acted for the good of the others. However, the main impasse between Aristotle's and Aquinas's conceptions rested on the fact that the former claimed the reciprocity of love as the basis of any amicable relationships, while the latter tried to justify the symmetry between friendship and charity. Moreover, according to Aquinas, even enemies could be loved since they were friends of other friends, united by the same love for God. Aquinas also elaborated a political interpretation of *amicitia* based on the idea that since individuals had simultaneously natural and social identities, they were able to create contacts

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<sup>43</sup> *Isidorus Hispalensis Sententiae*, III, 28.4, p. 266. 'Amicitia et prosperas res dulciores facit, et aduersas communione temperat leuiioresque reddit' [friendship makes things favourable and delightful, and it moderates opposite things in sharing, and it restores lighter things].

<sup>44</sup> Hrabanus Maurus, *Commentaria in Ieremiam* (Basileae, 1534). Available at: [http://mlat.uzh.ch/MLS/text.php?tabelle=Rabanus\\_Maurus\\_cps2&rumpfid=Rabanus\\_Maurus\\_cps2,%20Commentaria%20in%20Ieremiam,%20%2018,%20%20%201&level=4&corpus=2&lang=0&current\\_title=LIBER%20OCTAVUS%20DECIMUS.&links=&inframe=1&hide\\_apparatus=](http://mlat.uzh.ch/MLS/text.php?tabelle=Rabanus_Maurus_cps2&rumpfid=Rabanus_Maurus_cps2,%20Commentaria%20in%20Ieremiam,%20%2018,%20%20%201&level=4&corpus=2&lang=0&current_title=LIBER%20OCTAVUS%20DECIMUS.&links=&inframe=1&hide_apparatus=) (last accessed 19 June 2014).

<sup>45</sup> Miguel Rodríguez-Pantoja, 'Con Cicerón por los caminos (zigzagieantes) de la amistad', *Anuario Filosófico*, 34 (2001): pp. 433–62; Richard W. Southern, *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 138–65; Luigi Alfonsi, *La letteratura latina medievale* (Milano: Sansoni, 1972), pp. 9–10; Southern, *Saint Anselm and his Biographer: A Study of Monastic Life through 1059–c.1130* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 67–76. The theme of divine and Christian love will be explored in more depth in Chapter 3.

by communication. Additionally, they forged alliances based on concord, peace and utility, that is to say forms of *amicitia super aliqua* (friendship above all/everything) to keep the stability of the system in which they lived. Aquinas saw in mutual friendship and *dilectio* (esteem) the pillars for a peaceful life, which the law had to guarantee 'ut faciat amicitiam hominum ad invicem'.<sup>46</sup>

What appears as a common feature across time and space is that not only was friendship considered a necessary prerogative in one's personal and public life, but it had also to be shown frankly and displayed publicly. For this reason, as adduced already by Aristotle, conviviality and communication were two fundamental requirements.<sup>47</sup> The disclosure of the paradigm of signs and representations attributed to friendship demonstrated that between the pure feeling and its public accomplishment in most cases there was only an apparent separation, which was overcome in practice.<sup>48</sup>

Admittedly much remains to be said about the philosophical interpretations of friendship through the ages. However, this overview has served to highlight some key stages. In particular, the greater emphasis dedicated to the ancient doctrines constitutes a fundamental premise to fully understand the characteristics of the thirteenth-century Iberian production, which will be examined in the following chapters. In particular, echoes of Aristotle's works – once they were translated from Greek into Arabic, mostly between 1126 and 1198 – are discernible in the production attributed to Alfonso X of Castile's (r.1252–84) scriptorium, which appropriated and adapted those classical teachings as models of reference.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> In order to create mutual friendship between men. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Latin Text and English Translation, Introductions, Notes, Appendices and Glossaries* (London: Blackfriars in conjunction with Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1963–81), I–II q. 99 a. 2c. See also: John M. Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 227. For the importance that reciprocal benevolence assumed in Aquinas's thought: Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum*, ed. R.A. Gauthier (Rome: Edizioni Léonine, 1984), t. 47, vol. 2, L.VIII, lectio 2, *Vel apponendum*, p. 446, 1:101–102, 'et dicit quod adhuc apponendum est ad complendam rationem amicitiae, quod sit benevolentia mutua non latens' (and it also says that it is necessary to put together with the full reason of friendship also the mutual benevolence which must not be hidden).

<sup>47</sup> Benedicte Sère, 'De la vérité en amitié. Une phénoménologie médiévale du sentiment dans les commentaires de l'Éthique à Nicomaque: (XIIIe-XVe siècle)', *Revue Historique*, 636 (2005): pp. 793–848, at p. 800.

<sup>48</sup> John A. Burrow, *Gestures and Looks in Medieval Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Jean-Claude Schmitt, *La raison des gestes dans l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990).

<sup>49</sup> Before 1150 only a few Aristotelian works were available in Latin translation in Europe and only from the twelfth century onwards Latin translations were undertaken on



## Friendships in Medieval Europe: Typologies and Enactments

If the philosophical speculations on friendship and the influence that they played on the medieval production represent one part of the equation, so too did the concrete strengthening of amicable bonds, as both historical and literary sources suggest. A number of scholars have investigated how social relationships developed across medieval Europe and beyond.<sup>50</sup> One of the first to dive into this subject was Marc Bloch who, taking into account the situation of eleventh-century Île-de-France, argued that the definition of friends appeared whenever mothers, brothers, sisters and any other relatives connected to each other by blood ties, or by marital links, were discernible.<sup>51</sup> This suggests that amongst the emotional and social relationships that individuals established, blood ties were regarded as the *non-plus ultra*, although it is undeniable that friendship progressively acquired similar relevance. For Bloch both feudal and kinship relationships deserved the definition of friendships, as they conformed to the characteristics of fictitious fraternities.

Following Bloch's example, other scholars devoted attention to this subject, focusing on specific geographical areas and even more specific case studies.<sup>52</sup> When facing such an inconsistent variety, one wonders whether a general and single definition of friendship existed across medieval Europe. Admittedly, social and regional peculiarities influenced those definitions and in some cases intensified, or exacerbated, the gap which separated them. Nonetheless, most of the seemingly different European outputs show some undeniable common roots, as demonstrated by the widespread presence of a series of rhetorical *topoi*.<sup>53</sup> With

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the basis of Averroes' Arabic versions of the Greek originals.

<sup>50</sup> Adam Kosto, *Making Agreements in Medieval Catalonia: Power, Order, and the Written Word, 1000–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Margaret E. Mullett, *Theophylact of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1997), pp. 163–222; Regine Le Jan, *Femille et pouvoir dans le monde Franc (VIIè-Xè siècle): Essai d'anthropologie sociale* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1995); Georges Duby, *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Dunnett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L.A. Manyon, 2nd edn (2 vols, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965); Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*.

<sup>51</sup> Bloch, *Feudal Society*, p. 124.

<sup>52</sup> Apart from the already cited collections *Friendship in the Middle Ages* and *The Olde Daunce*, see also William A. Stowell, 'Personal Relationships in Medieval France', *PMLA*, 28 (1913): pp. 388–416.

<sup>53</sup> Constant J. Mews, Cary J. Nederman and Rodney M. Thomson (eds), *Rhetoric and Renewal in the Latin West, 1000–1540* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric*

regard to this point, two important considerations should be made: first, during the Middle Ages friendship remained one of the fundamental social networks in which individuals could take part, although it was rarely recognized as a self-sufficient, disinterested and independent link.<sup>54</sup> Second, the Aristotelian idea of friendship, considered a privileged bond and an essential element in human life, was a recurrent idea adopted and reformulated several times.

What emerges from historical, juridical, religious and literary sources proceeding from medieval central Europe is a definition of friendship which was – at least in the early Middle Ages – far from any pure expression of subjective feelings and emotions, but it was rather regarded as a contractual link, endowed with utilitarian goals, which also implied the obligation of mutual military and economic support. It was seen as a permanent agreement, transmitted as an inheritance.<sup>55</sup> Even though not always labelled as such, friendship was regarded as one of the strongest social bonds, equalled only by kinship, *consanguinitas*, godfatherhood and feudal relationships.<sup>56</sup>

It is also remarkable that together with documentary sources such as charters, treaties and chronicles, epic poems and particularly the *chansons de geste* contributed to disseminate an image of friendship as a pragmatic agreement which, if not subordinated to, was in any case a consequence of certain pre-existing companionships of arms.<sup>57</sup> Terms such as *prochains amis* (fellows/neighbours) or *naturels amis* (natural friend) frequently appeared in

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in the Middle Ages (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

<sup>54</sup> Medieval studies have been informed by the sociological approach (first appeared in 1980s with Granovetter) challenging the notion that emotion and affection are separate from instrumentality. M. Granovetter, 'Economic Action and Social Structures: The Problem of Embeddedness', *American Journal of Sociology*, 91 (1985): pp. 481–510. See also Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Jean-Claude Fraisse, *Philia. La notion d'amitié dans la philosophie antique* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1974).

<sup>55</sup> Tacitus proposed a similar view about the inheritance of friendship, although imbued with more emotional traits. Similarly, the *topos* of Arabic origins of the 'half-of a friend' appears in other works produced in the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages with little variance. Gaetano Lalomia, 'I complessi percorsi del racconto del *medio amico* nella Castiglia medievale', in *Testi, generi e tradizioni nella Romania medievale. Atti del VI Convegno Nazionale della società italiana di filologia romanza, Pisa il 28–30 settembre 2000*, ed. F. Cigni and M.P. Bett, (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 2002), pp. 79–96; Kenneth S. Scholberg, 'A Half-Friend and a Friend and a Half', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 35 (1958): pp. 187–98.

<sup>56</sup> Terms such as *fides*, *pax*, *foedus* and other variants also appeared. Huguette Legros, 'Le vocabulaire de l'amitié et son évolution sémantique au cours du XII siècle', *Cahiers de Linguistique Hispanique Médiévale*, 23 (1980): pp. 131–39.

<sup>57</sup> George F. Jones, *The Ethos of the 'Song of Roland'* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1963), p. 143.

the ancient romances as synonyms for relatives, reminding us that the concept of family was enlarged to embrace all the closest individuals – including friends and slaves – who would help both in everyday difficulties and on the battlefield.<sup>58</sup> The emergence of defensive obligations, which the parties had to mutually swear, finds its explanation in the widespread situations of hostility and violence, which rendered support and protection essential for survival. Not surprisingly, friendship assumed an enormous importance both as a private and a political link, and it was frequently reinforced by ritualized performances. The latter were only apparently spontaneous gestures, since they were conventionally agreed during councils, which were held on purpose to discuss and establish the meanings and value of those specific formulae and gestures.<sup>59</sup> Rituals such as the *convivium* (a banquet in which those who swore their loyalty celebrated together with those who received the oath), vows, kisses and public celebrations were commonly recognized as official tokens of friendship.<sup>60</sup>

Equally revealing is that the ancient Aristotelian ideas of community of goods and benefits shared for convenience and utility still predominated during the Middle Ages, with the addition of the moral and pragmatic duties of sharing both responsibilities and debts. In this respect, the case of the Medieval Near East is particularly interesting, as certain forms of commercial friendships among traders were viewed positively and even regarded as moral bonds. However, friendship was legitimized in the name of religion, since those who claimed to be Muhammad's believers were regarded as his friends and were consequently tied by a bond of companionship. This would explain why 'spiritual bonds of the greatest variety became the basis of sustained personal relationships transcending family attachments'.<sup>61</sup> Such a view was acknowledged as a turning point in the Islamic perception of friendship, above all if compared with the ancient epic tradition in which blood ties and kinship were regarded as the only valuable social connections:

<sup>58</sup> Legros, 'Le vocabulaire de l'amitié', pp. 132–33.

<sup>59</sup> Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried and Patrick Geary, ed., *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 71–88.

<sup>60</sup> Kiril Petkov, *The Kiss of Peace: Ritual, Self and Society in the High and Late Medieval West* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Althoff, 'Friendship Between States', in *Family, Friends and Followers*, pp. 12–25. See also Maurice Aymard, 'Amitié et convivialité', in *Histoire de la vie privée*, ed. P. Ariès and G. Duby, 2nd edn (Paris: Points-Seuil, 1999), pp. 455–99; *La sociabilité à table. Commensalité à travers les âges*, ed. Martin Aurell, Olivier Dumoulin and Françoise Thelamon (Rouen: Publications de l'Université de Rouen, 1992).

<sup>61</sup> Shelomo D. Goitein, 'Formal Friendship in the Medieval Near East', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 115 (1971): pp. 484–89, at p. 486.

Take for your friend whom you will in the days of peace.  
But know that when fighting comes your kinsman alone is near.<sup>62</sup>

It is clear that in classical Islamic thought, even if friendship was regarded positively, it was still subordinated to kinship. The same situation had been experienced in ancient Greece where, as Herman argued, the partners in the relationship cannot, for the most part, assume a real kinship role: a blood-brother is not a substitute brother, nor is a godfather a surrogate father. In terms of their place and function in the total network of social relations, they all are rather special kinds of friend. In other words, real and simulated roles are complementary, not interchangeable. Only to a limited extent does the range of their duty overlap.<sup>63</sup>

Returning to Western Europe, Gerd Althoff's observations on friendship and co-operative groups in the Germanic area add pieces to this polychromatic puzzle.<sup>64</sup> They were aggregations of individuals joined together by the common aim of achieving pragmatic goals; but while the former usually involved a restricted number of people – two or a few more – *coniurationes* (sworn unions) implied a wider participation. In the Germanic context, friendship was recurrently described in terms of political treaties; a characteristic feature which also appeared elsewhere in Europe. The nobles, for instance, used consanguinity, familiarity and friendly affiliations to control and limit royal power, while rulers by no means resisted the creation of those chains because they dispensed manpower and military support for the safeguard of their kingdoms. According to Althoff, it was only from the twelfth century that written formulae rigidly stated such duties, whilst in the early Middle Ages pacts of friendship were based on the general oath to help the other in any aspects of life.<sup>65</sup> This argument seems particularly valid when considering the changing power relationships between the German kings and their aristocracies. However, scholars such as Garnier and van Eickles disagreed on the idea that there was a rigid chronological turning point from open-ended to more contractual bonds, and they focused instead on

<sup>62</sup> *Hamāsa of Abū Tammām*, ed. G. Freytag (Bonn: Baaden, 1828), p. 327. The quote also appears in Goitein, 'Formal Friendship', p. 485 and Reynold A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956; repr. 1969), p. 84.

<sup>63</sup> Herman, *Ritualized Friendship*, p. 33.

<sup>64</sup> Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*, pp. 65–101.

<sup>65</sup> Gerd Althoff, '*Amicitiae* [Friendships] as Relationships Between States and People', in *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Reading*, ed. L.K. Little and B.H. Rosenwein (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 191–210, at p. 210.

how and to what extent 'vertical' and 'horizontal' political networks functioned and interacted.<sup>66</sup>

It seems safe to argue that in the Middle Ages any personal relationships could rarely, if ever, be detached from the social and political spheres of life.<sup>67</sup> The characteristics attributed to a perfect friend became the parameters used to select the candidates who could access the highest social spheres in order to become trustees and counsellors of the figures in power. Nevertheless, there were also cases of *coniurationes*; that is to say groups of individuals bounded by the vow of mutual help and support, with the aim of committing subversive acts against the royal power. Medieval literary and narrative sources offer a range of alternative models. In some cases amities were legitimized in the name of God and companionship of arms was presented as the result of a religious agency, as for the cases of the crusaders and the military orders. However, friends were also chosen because of the pleasure they could give, rather than for their innate moral virtues exclusively. In such a frame of references the legend of *Ami et Amile* is probably one of the most revealing.<sup>68</sup> The protagonists of the story are two friends, who committed immoral actions in the name of their mutual affection. Amile, in trouble because he seduced the emperor's daughter, asked for Ami's aid and begged his friend to rescue him by impersonating him during his trial. Ami accepted, but the role he had to play led him to commit bigamy. In fact, once Ami won the suit, he had to marry the princess, even though he was already married. A form of ethical order was finally re-established by the intervention of a *deus ex machina*, which caused Ami a mortal illness from which he could be rescued only with the blood taken from Amile's son. Although the religious interpretation of the characters' actions lies in the background, the story brings various other issues to the readers' attention, of which the most thought-

<sup>66</sup> Claudia Garnier, *Amicus Amicis, Inimicus Inimici: Politische Freundschaft und Fürstliche Netzwerke im 13. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2000); Klaus van Eickels, *Vom inszenierten Konsens zum systematisierten Konflikt-französischen Beziehungen und ihre Wahrnehmung an der Wende vom Hoch- zum Spätmittelalter* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 2002).

<sup>67</sup> For example, on guilds and urban affiliations see Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*, pp. 65–101.

<sup>68</sup> *Ami et Amile: chanson de geste*, ed. Peter F. Dembowski (Paris: Champion, 1969); Klaus Oschema, 'Reflections on Love and Friendship in the Middle Ages', in *Love, Friendship and Faith in Europe, 1300–1800*, ed. Laura Gowing, Michael Hunter and Miri Rubin (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 43–65; Emma Herrán Alonso, '“Amicus” o la historia de la amistad verdadera. Otro testimonio peninsular', *Hispanic Review*, 71 (2003): pp. 549–63; Alexander H. Krappe, 'The Legend of Amicus and Amelius', *The Modern Language Review*, 18 (1923): pp. 152–61.

provoking is perhaps the dilemma over whether ethical values and moral constraints might legitimately be betrayed for a friend's sake.<sup>69</sup>

Latin epistolary friendship in the twelfth century is another interesting example of the influence which the bonds of friendship exerted on both the private and public spheres of human life, as envisaged in the correspondence between Peter of Celle and his circle of acquaintances from southern England and northern France, some of whom held positions at the highest levels of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>70</sup> The vocabulary used in his letters belongs to the semantic area of *amicitia*. These epistolary exchanges represent a point of balance between the more political constraints of the letters of Pope Gregory VII and John of Salisbury,<sup>71</sup> and what appeared to be purer spiritual claims, such as those by St Anselm, Bernard de Clairvaux, Peter the Venerable and Stephen Tournai, among others.<sup>72</sup> However, recent scholarship has challenged such a rigid dichotomy by exploring the complex interactions between personal affection, political allegiance, ideology, spirituality and rhetoric.<sup>73</sup>

Medieval approaches to, and interpretations of, amicable agreements leave another important question to be answered: what was the connection between

<sup>69</sup> Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship*, pp. 87–136.

<sup>70</sup> *The Letters of Peter of Celle*, ed. J. Haseldine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); J. Haseldine, 'Understanding the Language of *Amicitia*. The Friendship Circle of Peter of Celle (c.1115–1183)', *Journal of Medieval History*, 20 (1994): pp. 237–60.

<sup>71</sup> Gregory VII, *The Correspondence of Pope Gregory VII: Selected Letters from the Registrum*, trans. E. Emerton (New York: Octagon, 1966); *The Letters of John of Salisbury: The Early Letters (1153–1161)*, ed. W.J. Millor and H.E. Butter (2 vols, London: Nelson, 1955); *The Letters of John of Salisbury: The Later Letters (1163–1180)*, ed. C.N.L. Brooke and W.J. Millor (2 vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979); J. McLoughlin, '*Amicitia* in Practice: John of Salisbury (c.1120–1180) and His Circle', in *Traditions and Innovations: Essays on British Literature of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. David G. Allen and Robert A. White (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), pp. 165–81.

<sup>72</sup> Saint Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, *Opera omnia ad fidem codicum recensuit Franciscus Salesius Schmitt* (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1946)

<sup>73</sup> J. Haseldine, 'Friendship, Intimacy and Corporate Networking in the Twelfth Century: The Politics of Friendship in the Letters of Peter the Venerable', *English Historical Review*, 126 (2011): pp. 251–80; Gillian Knight, *The Correspondence between Peter the Venerable and Bernard de Clairvaux* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Walter Ysabaert, 'Ami, client et intermédiaire: Étienne de Tournai et ses réseaux de relations (1167–1192)', *Sacris Erudiri*, 40 (2001): pp. 415–67; Ambrogio M. Piazzoni, 'Un falso problema storiografico. Note a proposito della "amicizia" tra Pietro il Venerabile di Cluny e Bernardo di Clairvaux', *Bullettino dell'Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo e Archivio Muratoriano*, 89 (1981): pp. 443–87. See also the seminal, and now controversial, work approaching the subject as a matter of emotion and affection by Brian P. McGuire, *Friendship and Community: The Monastic Experience, 350–1250* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988).



love and friendship? Both lovers and friends were frequently named *amici*. In fact, *amor* and *amicitia* had very loosely defined borders, at least from a purely semantic perspective. This rendered any attempt at classification very difficult to undertake since 'love between man and woman was expressed in terms of friendship, and friendship between man and man was expressed in terms of love'.<sup>74</sup> In the early medieval Latin production *amicitia*, though defined as both a personal and private link, was regarded as a bond much stronger than love, since 'itaque amicitia semper prodest, amor etiam aliquando noce'.<sup>75</sup> By contrast, there was no neat separation between those concepts in the later vernacular tradition. In medieval French, for instance, *amor* signified both *amour* (love) and *amitié* (friendship).<sup>76</sup> Similarly, in medieval Castilian *amigo* and *amiga* were frequently adopted to define those who were linked in a sexual or amorous relationship. The same polyvalent connotations of *amare* are noticeable in the vernacular Italian.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, the rituals of love usually mirrored vassalic conventions and formulae.<sup>78</sup> However, in the absence of any specific vocabulary to define those connections, it is not surprising that they were frequently presented through the semantics of love.<sup>79</sup> Romances and poetry abounded with those parallelisms between love and friendship and further examples of this can be found in the Iberian *cantigas de amor* and *cantigas de amigo*, which will be discussed in the following section.

<sup>74</sup> Gervase Mathew, 'Ideals of Friendship', in *Patterns of Love and Courtesy, Essays in Memory of C. S. Lewis*, ed. John Lawlor (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), pp. 45–53, at p. 46.

<sup>75</sup> Whereas friendship is always worthy, love can sometimes cause harm. See also: Frederic J.E. Raby, 'Amor and Amicitia: A Mediaeval Poem', *Speculum*, 40 (1965): pp. 599–610, at p. 601. The quotation is attributed to Seneca, *Ep. mor.* VI (35).

<sup>76</sup> Legros, 'Le vocabulaire de l'amitié', pp. 131–39.

<sup>77</sup> The thirteenth-century *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri is a case in point. In fact, the examples of friendship which appear in this work lack a proper definition and they are presented through the vocabulary of *amore* and *amare*. See also the definition of *amistade* or *amistate* and *amico* in *Enciclopedia Dantesca*, ed. Aldo Ferrabino (5 vols, Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1970–76), vol. 1, pp. 202–12.

<sup>78</sup> *The Meaning of Courtly Love: Papers of the First Annual Conference of the Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, State University of New York at Binghamton, March 17–18, 1967*, ed. F.X. Newman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1968); Clive S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition*, 2nd edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 1–43; Alfred Jeanroy, *La poésie lyrique des troubadours* (Toulouse: Privat, 1934), p. 91. The concept of 'feudalization of love' had already appeared in Eduard Wechssler, *Das Kulturproblem des Minnesangs* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1909; repr. Osnabrück: Zeller, 1969), p. 177.

<sup>79</sup> Legros, 'Le vocabulaire de l'amitié', p. 139.

Although these definitions of friendship had diverse origins, they nevertheless present a common set of characteristics regulating moral attitudes and rules of behaviour that any friends should possess in order to be recognized and defined as such.

## Friendship in Medieval Iberia

In the Iberian Peninsula the term *amistad* (friendship) was recurrently used as a synecdoche to indicate spiritual and sensual love, kinship, companionship, formal and private alliances – of both offensive and defensive character – pacts of mutual support, as well as any ritualized form of brotherhood. With regard to the latter, one of the earliest to adopt both historical and sociological approaches to study the different types of connections recorded in some official documents issued in the kingdom of León between the tenth and the thirteenth centuries, was Eduardo de Hinojosa, who pointed out the strict connection existing between friendship, peace, security and treaty, labelled as *hermandades*, *amizdades* and *fraternitas*.<sup>80</sup> The benefits which the ‘brothers’ gained consisted of enjoying equally the profits derived from the properties which they held in common or from the goods on which they claimed a shared benefit. Particularly interesting are the cases of brotherhoods signed among people who shared ecclesiastical estates, since by the thirteenth century (unlike the situation in the early Middle Ages) they were classified as private property in the hands of the lay owners who kept them.

Not only was entering a brotherhood a matter of economic and commercial profit, but on several occasions it represented a social tool of integration and protection, aimed at defending its participants from any external threats. An agreed brotherhood was also a way to reconcile enemies that had been divided by anger or by previous crimes and offences committed against each other’s honour. For example, in 1228 Pedro and García Fernández signed a perpetual peace with Rodrigo Egea and received him as *hermano*, finally putting an end to the ongoing rivalry between the two families.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Eduardo de Hinojosa y Naveros, ‘La fraternidad artificial en España’, *Revista de Archivos, Museos y Bibliotecas*, 13 (1905): pp. 1–18, published also in *Obras. T. I. Estudios de investigación* (Madrid: Ministerio de Justicia y CSIC, 1948), pp. 259–78; Eduardo de Hinojosa y Naveros and Francisco Tomás Valiente, *El elemento germánico en el derecho español*, 2nd edn (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 1993), p. 380.

<sup>81</sup> Hinojosa, ‘La fraternidad artificial’, pp. 277–78.



The majority of these alliances signed in medieval Iberia were either aimed at defending common properties, profits and inheritances, which those who had no direct heirs shared with their acquired 'brothers', or at protecting the individuals involved. Significantly, other geographical areas presented similar, although not coincident, structures: from the French military brotherhood of arms; the Italian agrarian *consortium*; the Eastern pacts of amity legitimized by symbolic rituals; to the charitable model of some Serbian brotherhoods. More extreme examples come from certain African tribes, whose members shared any kinds of goods and possessions, including their wives.<sup>82</sup>

These considerations pose questions about how different the situation was in the Iberian Peninsula and what were its peculiarities. Friendship was perceived as a *pactum amiciarum*, that is to say a social agreement aimed at protecting both public peace and the constituted order. In eleventh- and twelfth-century León and Castile, for example, the rise of the new *señoríos territoriales* (territorial lordships) and the strengthening of the municipal authorities were perceived as incumbent threats by the weakest social groups, which found protection within the brotherhoods that they established. However, as Prieto Bances argued, friendship and alliance were distinct concepts as they frequently originated from different situations and needs.<sup>83</sup> An interesting document, probably from 1297, describing the council which took place in Ovanos, where the principal representatives of the cities of Navarre were summoned, is particularly revealing.<sup>84</sup> According to this document, the assembled *bins homes* (nobles, good and wise men) signed a *dita amiztat* according to which not only had they to behave with mutual respect, but they committed themselves to protect the kingdom of Navarre and its rulers from any dangers and enemies. In the oath they also committed themselves to preserve such an alliance, risking monetary penalties for non-compliance. Another interesting point to consider is to what extent vassalic structures and the adoption of a recognized code of knighthood influenced the establishment of amicable bonds in the Iberian Peninsula, in which such codes had a later impact if compared with other European areas.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Emilio Sáez, 'Un diploma interesante para el estudio de la fraternidad artificial', *AHDE*, 17 (1946): pp. 751–52.

<sup>83</sup> Prieto Bances, 'Los amigos en el fuero de Oviedo', *AHDE*, 23 (1963): pp. 203–46. See also: Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Spiritual Friendship in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile: Images of Interaction Between the Sacred and the Spiritual Worlds of Thirteenth-Century Iberia', in *Friendship in The Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, ed. A. Classen and M. Sandighe, (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010), pp. 445–76, at p. 449.

<sup>84</sup> *Textos lingüísticos del medioevo español*, ed. D.J. Gifford and F.W. Hodcroft, 2nd edn (Oxford: Dolphin Book Co., 1966), pp. 145–46.

<sup>85</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Spiritual Friendship', pp. 449–50.

The *cantigas de amor*, *cantigas de amigo* and *cantigas d'escarnho e de maldizer* provide additional evidence to explain the ambivalence, and sometimes coincidence, of the terms *amor* and *amistad* in the Iberian context. These Galician-Portuguese lyrical collections, despite some common features recalling the trans-Pyrenean model of the troubadour *canço*, presented elements of recognized originality.<sup>86</sup> As demonstrated by Paden, both the *cantigas de amor* and *cantigas de amigo* are recognizable for the presence of certain keywords, which appear from the very first stanzas of each poem.<sup>87</sup> The adoption of courtly formulae calls to mind vassalic rituals and structures, such as the adoption of the term *senhor* to indicate both one's lover and lord. However, the semantic connotations related to the term *amigo* stretched to include lovers and companions alongside any other vassal and freeman bounded by a fief.<sup>88</sup>

Finally, medieval Iberian perceptions of friendship neither appear as rigidly classified nor as totally deprived of any emotional implications, as the analysis of the historical and juridical production of the time would suggest. Both then and now friendship has been regarded as a solid basis of personal, political and social life, but it has also been strictly associated with the sphere of human humours and passions, almost to the point of being considered as genetically encoded.

## Friendship in the Pre-Alfonsine Literary Production

In order to outline the characteristics of the literary and cultural background which sustained the development of thirteenth-century Iberian conceptions of friendship, in this section attention will be devoted to a selection of didactic, narrative and doctrinal works of Greek and Sanskrit origins, which were first translated into Arabic from the ninth to the twelfth centuries and into the Castilian vernacular in the thirteenth century. Alfonso X himself, by promoting, supervising and encouraging numerous works of translation, was not simply preserving knowledge, but re-shaping symbols, among which those associated

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<sup>86</sup> Julian Weiss, 'On the Conventionality of the *Cantigas d'Amor*', *La Corónica*, 26 (1997): pp. 225–45; Linda M.A. Rodrigues, 'On Originality, Courtly Love, and the Portuguese *Cantigas*', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 27 (1990): pp. 95–107.

<sup>87</sup> William D. Paden, 'Principles of Generic Classification in the Medieval European Lyric: The Case of Galician-Portuguese', *Speculum*, 81 (2006): pp. 76–97; Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Spiritual Friendship', pp. 450–51.

<sup>88</sup> Jan F. Niermeyer and C. van de Kieft, *Mediae Latinitatis lexicon minus*, rev. J.W.J. Burgers (2 vols, Leiden: Wissenschaftlichen Buchgesellschaft, 2002), vol. 1, p. 53, cited in Paden, 'Principles of Generic Classification', p. 91.

with ideas of power, authority and social structures.<sup>89</sup> The *Calila et Dimna*, *Libro de los buenos proverbios*, *Flores de Filosofía*, *Secreto de los secretos* and the *Historia de la doncella Teodor* illustrate how the phenomenology and typologies of friendship were perceived, and sometimes modified, once they entered their new occidental cradle of reception. As pieces of ‘wisdom literature’ – mainly elaborated for the princes’ education – these collections often suffered from evident moralizations, due to the Christian context from which they were assimilated. However, what emerges from these texts is a list of common features, among which loyalty, trustworthiness, affection, mutual advice and preservation of the other’s secrets, upon which any solid friendship should be built.

An instance of this is *Calila et Dimna*, the eighth-century Arabic translation of which was commissioned by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mansur (r.754–775) from an original Sanskrit version, which had reached Iran by the sixth century via its Middle Persian or Pahlavi translation.<sup>90</sup> This is a didactic collection of short stories that a fictional philosopher narrates to an imaginary king – who was simultaneously the fictitious character and the real king-reader – whose moral education was forged through the thinker’s learned advice. Most of the protagonists of these narrations are anthropomorphized animals standing for everyman. In fact, the general target of the philosopher’s wise teachings was all good subjects, whose desire was to emulate their lord’s exemplary behaviour. The core of his message is that before establishing any close friendship or trusting others blindly, one should reach a profound acquaintance with them. Hence those who were tested had to show and prove virtues, such as loyalty, honesty, wisdom and good advice, in order to deserve the ennobling title of friends:

... et ívale toda vía queriendo más et pagándose más dél, atanto que fue el más privado de su conpañã, et el que más él amava et preçiava.

[... and he was still loving him more and enjoying his company more, so much that he was the closest among the rest of his company and the one he most loved and respected.]

Ca el mejor de los amigos es el que más lealmente conseja a su amigo.

[The best friend is the one who gives the most loyal possible advice to his friend.]

<sup>89</sup> Maribel Fierro, ‘Alfonso X “The Wise”: The Last Almohad Caliph?’, *Medieval Encounters*, 15/2–4 (2009): pp. 175–98.

<sup>90</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, ed. Juan M. Cacho Bleuca and Maria J. Lacarra (Madrid: Castalia, 1984).

Et una de las locuras et de las sandezes deste mundo es querer aver amigos sin lealtad ...

[A crazy and foolish thing in life is yearning for friends who are not loyal ...]

... ca los amigos que meten sus faziendas uno en mano de otro faze más durar el puro amor.

[... because friends who rely on each other make their pure love last longer.]<sup>91</sup>

In this respect, the gnostic miscellanea *Flores de Filosofía* is also revealing.<sup>92</sup> The text, in which specific warnings to the sovereign alternated with generic admonitions addressed to all the subjects, unfolds a series of fundamental requirements, such as *buen talente* (good intentions) and the rightful behaviour dictated by *buen seso* (wisdom), that those who claimed the title of friends should necessarily possess.<sup>93</sup> In particular, the idea of friendship is imbued with a patent religious tone according to which *el bien fazer* (rightful behaviour), a value also advertised in the *Calila et Dimna*, becomes the prerogative in order to gain both God's love and companions' affection.<sup>94</sup> A friend should be *sesudo* (wise), he should *auer en Dios creença* (believe in God) and *amor de los omes* (love for mankind). In these statements the echo of the Evangelic sermons is undeniable:

... non fagas a otro lo que non querrias que fiziesen a ti. Sabet que en amar adios se ajuntan todas las buenas maneras.<sup>95</sup>

<sup>91</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 137, 150, 170, 171.

<sup>92</sup> *Flores de Filosofía*, ed. José M. Lucía Megías (Alcalá de Henares: Servicio de Publicaciones, 1997).

<sup>93</sup> In *Flores de Filosofía* a conspicuous number of sentences (though not explicitly related to friendship) refer to the topics of *mansedad* [friendliness, docility], *mesura* [moderation] and *buen seso* [wisdom], which are also fundamental virtues for any good friend.

<sup>94</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, p. 112: 'non ay ningund amigo tal commo fazer buena vida' (there is not as good a friend as living a respectable life) and p. 234: 'et el omne bueno non ha deste mundo ninguna cosa nin ningund poder nin ningund amigo, sinon las buenas obras et non más' (and the good man gets nothing from this world, neither power nor good friends, but just his good deeds and nothing more).

<sup>95</sup> *Flores de Filosofía*, XIV:8. The same idea, with minor lexical variants, also appears in the *Libro de los cien capítulos: (dichos de sabios en palabras breves e complidas)*, ed. Marta Haro Cortés (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert; Madrid: Iberoamericana, 1998), p. 38.

[... do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you. You should know that all your good principles should apply together in loving God].

Another interesting pre-Alfonsine work is the *Historia de la donzella Teodor*, a dialogue-structured narration, which is believed to have been adapted from one of the tales from the *One Thousand and One Nights*.<sup>96</sup> Here the moral teachings emerge directly from the narrative diegesis. The young girl, Teodor, represents the perfect model of a wise, well-educated, discreet, generous and loyal friend. In the story, she acted with no fear or reserve in order to save the merchant to whom she was generously attached and grateful for the education and protection that he had offered her. As for other European contexts, this example confirms that, although rare, women were admitted to friendship circles, although on different, and often restricted, terms compared to men.<sup>97</sup>

Alongside such models of exemplary friendships, these pre-Alfonsine works also present some ambiguous and thought-provoking cases. The story of the crows and the owls narrated in the *Calila et Dimna*, which the philosopher provides as an answer to the sovereign's question about how to prevent falseness and deceit from those who claimed to be his friends, is a case in point.<sup>98</sup> The principal plot, which contains several other 'stories within the story' recounted by the same fictional characters – following the *mise-en-abîme* narrative pattern<sup>99</sup> – focuses on the theme of natural enmity and the impossibility to overcome it. The events involved a flock of crows which were attacked, and most of whom were murdered, by the owls which they had foolishly trusted. In the attempt to find the most opportune way to react against any future threats, the king of the crows summoned his loyal advisors. The sovereign's closest and wisest private advisor warned him not to trust the mellifluous and falsely humble words of the enemies, blaming the decision made by one of the crow's ancestors, who chose an

<sup>96</sup> *Historia de la donzella Teodor*, ed. Nieves Baranda and Víctor Infantes (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, S.A., 1995).

<sup>97</sup> Elsewhere in Europe it was not uncommon for male authors to cultivate some female correspondents. Jerome, for example, addressed at least one-third of his letters to religious-minded women, although in the same collection none of those women's replies appears.

<sup>98</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 224–52.

<sup>99</sup> M. Picone, 'Tre tipi di cornice novellistica: modelli orientali e tradizione narrativa medievale', *Filologia e Critica*, 13 (1998): pp. 3–26; Maria J. Lacarra, *Cuentística medieval en España: los orígenes* (Zaragoza: Dpto. de Literatura Española de la Universidad de Zaragoza, 1979); Cesare Segre, 'Le forme e le tradizioni didattiche', in *La littérature didactique, allégorique et satirique, Grundriss der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters*, 6/1, ed. H.R. Jauss, (Heidelberg: Carl Winter-Universitätsverlag, 1968), pp. 58–145.

owl – ‘por natura falso et engañoso’<sup>100</sup> – as their king. Looking at the events from the crows’ perspective, it seems that they were stabbed in the back. However, the apparently deceptive action carried out by the owl was motivated by a loyal goal – the attempt to save his own flock – which makes him an exemplary good friend from the owls’ point of view.

Book V of the *Calila et Dimna* provides another interesting example. A crow, after having witnessed the liberation of a flock of pigeons by the intervention of a mouse, who introduced himself as their friend, was so staggered by the latter’s loyalty that he pleaded for his friendship. The mouse rejected the proposal by explaining that a relationship between himself and the crow would be impossible to maintain since the two animals belonged to two biologically rival races, of which one would naturally prevail.<sup>101</sup> Again, the theory of enmity of nature appears, but it is expanded by distinguishing between *enemistad entre iguales* (enmity between equals) and *enemistad* arisen between unequal subjects. In both cases the possibility to sign a temporary truce was not completely denied, but those who tied themselves with their enemies, believing in the possibility of an eternal friendship, were destined to be deceived:

... et la paz et la tregua del que ha algo menester las más vezes enemistad se torna, et non deve el omne fiar por tal tregua nin ser engañado por ella; ca el agua, maguer sea bien escalentada con el fuego, non dexa por eso de amatar el fuego, si de suso se le echan. Et solamente tal es el que faze amistad con su enemigo commo el que lleva la culebra en su seno, que no sabe cuándo se le ensañará et lo matará.<sup>102</sup>

[... and peace and truce with an interested person most of the times turns into enmity, and men should neither trust such a truce nor be deceived by it; since it is like water which, even though is warmed up by fire, it would still extinguish a fire if it is thrown on it. And those who make friends with their enemies are like those who bear snakes on their chests, as they never know when those will mercilessly react and kill them.]

<sup>100</sup> ... false and deceitful by nature. *Calila e Dimna*, p. 232.

<sup>101</sup> The same idea is expressed by the bull Schanzabeh (Sançeba) in a monologue in which he blames himself for having forgotten for a while to be an herbivore and, for this reason, the natural prey for the stronger lion. See *Calila e Dimna*, p. 157.

<sup>102</sup> The same example appears in Petrus Alphonsus, *Disciplina Clericalis*, ed. and trans. M.J. Lacarra (Zaragoza: Guara, 1980) in story V, which is inspired by the well-known Aesop’s original story. See also *Calila e Dimna*, p. 207.

Despite the abundance of examples provided by the mouse in order to demonstrate his assumption, the crow insisted by affirming that friendship between those who are good goes beyond any racial distinction since it relies on their nobility of soul, which is supposedly independent from any rank or class distinction.<sup>103</sup>

The examples of enmity by nature do not stand alone and numerous other cases appear in which the value of friendship is undermined by avarice, cowardice and human vices. The story of the two jackals, Calila and Dimna, from which the collection takes its name, is emblematic of this. Dimna, a betrayer and an evil-doer when it comes to social climbing, did not listen to his friend Calila's advice and pursued his malevolent plot against the friendship – based on pure affection and mutual trust – between the lion king and the bull Saṅgeba, since he feared that the latter would usurp the privileged position of counsellor which the jackal claimed for himself. The practical accomplishment of a true friendship was in this case frustrated by the interference of human passions and temptations. This is also remarked upon in the *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios* – a collection of aphorisms attributed to classical authorities – in which the actions of those trusted as friends were fundamental to either fortify or weaken such relationships:

E dixo Socrat: – El que es de buenas mañas esse es de buena vida y la salut es vida perdurable y su amiztat es poca y las buenas mañas fazen al omne grant amor y bien querença.<sup>104</sup>

[And Socrates said: the person who acts honestly lives a good life, and their health is the sign of a durable life, and their friendships are few, and their good actions make them deserve great love and affection.]

Nonetheless, the same collection presents another interesting view, attributed to Plato, according to which love and its opposite were both motivated by astrological affinities.<sup>105</sup> Therefore, individuals found themselves involved in amicable relationships not by volition, guided by emotions and rational thoughts, but rather because some supernatural essence moved them towards those outcomes. By accepting the idea that everything was written in the stars, the power of human free will would be denied completely. What is interesting is that such

<sup>103</sup> The idea proposed by the crow recalls the Aristotelian concept of perfect friendship between those who are good or alike in virtues. Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.*, VIII, 3 (6–9)–1156 b.

<sup>104</sup> *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*, ed. Harlan Sturm (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1971), p. 77.

<sup>105</sup> *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*, pp. 87–88.



a contradiction would equally question the value of the medieval didactic and moral collections examined above, which were aimed at instructing the readers and listeners about how to recognize, and behave as, good friends. However, the *sententia* quoted above does not specify whether such a theory of a transcendental origin of human relations would also apply to friendship, although the formula is so generic that it could be easily adapted to any contexts. Nonetheless, as Pythagoras argued, according to the *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*:

Y castiguovos que ayades de los otros omnes los mejores por amigos y los mas nobles y que le seades buenos en dicho y en fecho de guisa que se aprovechen ellos de vos y vos dellos.<sup>106</sup>

[And I recommend that you should have the best and the noblest among the other men as friends and that you should be good to them both in words and deeds so that they can gain advantage from you as you will from them.]

Mutual support between individuals who were genuinely noble souls remained the ideal rule, although in practice such perfect bonds might have been rare exceptions.

### Other Pre-Alfonsine Categorizations: An Overview

From the aforementioned pre-Alfonsine literary *corpus* a taxonomy of friendship might be extrapolated, together with a whole spectrum of significant features, such as the genealogy of amity; the social implications which generated such bonds or influenced their accomplishment; the multiple definitions of friends; the proof needed to verify the reliability of these relationships; and the similarities and differences between the roles of friends, companions and counsellors. Modern sociological approaches have also taken into account biological factors, such as gender, age and personality, as well as the physical environment, ideology, occupation and the geographical and social mobility of the individuals involved in a relationship.<sup>107</sup> Even though it might appear somewhat anachronistic a statement, the typologies of friendship recognizable in the early Iberian literary

<sup>106</sup> *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios*, p. 142.

<sup>107</sup> Jeremy Boissevain, *Friends of Friends: Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974). Margaret E. Mullett, 'The Detection of Relationship in Middle Byzantine Literary Texts: The Case of Letters and Letter-networks', in *L'Épistolographie et la poésie épigrammatique: Actes de la 16è Table Ronde du XXè Congrès international des Études*



production in some ways do conform to this complex pattern. In fact, one can distinguish the categories of *amistad por vezindat* (friendship by proximity), which arose by sharing the same natural habitat; *amistad de natura* (natural friendship), which was the link between individuals belonging to the same race or living in the same country; amity between exponents of the same social and professional group; gender relationships; and connections definable as 'blessed amities', that is to say bonds generated by destiny and, therefore, independent from human free will.

*Amistad por vezindat*, if interpreted as the ineluctable result of sharing the same natural environment, would imply the existence of a mechanistic chain according to which, given specific circumstances, certain relationships evolve automatically.<sup>108</sup> If such a premise were to be accepted, the rational power of man and the influence played by feelings and emotions would be undermined completely. Nonetheless, even though the strengthening of a friendly bond might be evidently facilitated by sharing the same social environment it does not depend on it necessarily.

Another interesting category is *amistad de natura*, which is the connection between those sharing the same biological and ethnic roots. By transposing the model suggested by the allegorical animal tales into a human context, the equivalent of *amistad de natura* would be the link between individuals belonging to the same social environment. On the one hand, this could facilitate friendly exchanges, but on the other hand this extremely restrictive space limited the possibilities of forging many relationships outside it. These restrictions would also explain the difficult situation experienced by those who occupied the highest social spheres, to which only a selected few were allowed access, yet without ever equalling their status. The vocabulary adopted to define those relationships also stresses the ranking system on which they were based. The more highly positioned figures named their lower companions as friends, but the contrary never occurred and their subjects were only allowed to use denominations which emphasized their social inferiority.

In the pre-Alfonsine gnostic texts mentioned above, the relationships between unequal subjects were denied and depicted as impossible to achieve, although in the *Calila et Dimna* and in the *Historia de la donzella Teodor* there are some exceptions. In the former, the relationship between the lion king and the bull Sançeba transcended any discrimination caused by their uneven

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*byzantins*, ed. W. Hörander and M. Grünbart, Dossiers Byzantins 3 (Paris: Belles Lettres, 2003), pp. 63–74.

<sup>108</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 165–70.

conditions. Their friendship was not denied *a priori* and its failure was instead attributed to Dimna's treacherous intervention. Similarly, in the *Historia de la donzella Teodor* the protagonist is portrayed as her lord's best friend, not because she felt obliged or because she was victim of a natural subjugation dictated both by her gender and social inferiority, but rather because she acted out of pure love, generosity and devotion.

Among the links dictated by nature or favoured by a shared environment, the relationships between people belonging to the same professional group are also particularly noticeable. Common interests, professional solidarity and similarities of habits constituted the seeds of solid commercial agreements, which could even develop into personal friendships. Again the *Historia de la donzella Teodor* provides a valuable example through the story of a Muslim seller who helped another merchant in a difficult situation, by putting all his possessions at his disposal.<sup>109</sup> Whether the two were friends because they both belonged to the same professional category or it was rather a coincidence which supplemented an already existing connection is a matter of speculation. However, moral and contractual rules – similar to those applied in ancient Greek societies – must have been put in place to regulate both loans and borrowings in those ambiguous situations in which the lines of separation between real amities and mere commercial associations overlapped.

The relationships between individuals bonded together by fraudulent intents are no less significant. By definition friendship was built on mutual succour and loyalty, but the respect of those pragmatic and moral rules did not eliminate the possibility of applying them to achieve an immoral goal. The analysis of the terminology adopted in the story of the *Calila et Dimna* about a man who wanted to rob his companion is enlightening.<sup>110</sup> A precautionary note is necessary here to better understand it: the extradiegetic third-person narrator is using the thief-character's perspective to narrate this episode. The character dubbed as *compañero* (companion) is the partner that the protagonist wanted to rob, while he used the appellation of *amigo* to address the companion who joined his malevolent plot. Even the lexicon used here seems to emphasize the value of mutual support in any aspect of life, including when committing a crime. With regard to this point, another story from the same collection is instructive. The protagonists, who address each other as *compañeros*,<sup>111</sup> are bonded in a comradeship based on their common desire to obtain material profits from their

<sup>109</sup> *Historia de la donzella Teodor*, p. 60.

<sup>110</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, 'the thief and the moonbeam', pp. 95–96.

<sup>111</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 109–11.

planned robbery, although their supposed friendship disappeared just when it was most needed.<sup>112</sup> The heroic idea of a friend who is ready to die for the other's sake is here supplanted by selfish and material interests, which do not involve any personal risks. In all likelihood this is also the reason why the epithet of friend is absent in the thieves' dialogues and is replaced instead by *compañero*. Friendship existed when people shared the same – either praiseworthy or deplorable – goals, together with the secrets related to them. Nonetheless, as Aristotle had already foreseen, relationships based on interest were destined to end every time that their original purposes were either achieved or expired.

Another interesting aspect to investigate is the connection between friendship and the gender of the individuals involved. In the aforementioned pre-Alfonsine *corpus* three main typologies of relationships involving women appear: though rare, friendships with men; friendships as an extension of marital and familial affection; and relationships between women. Significantly, the latter were the only instances (among those listed above) presented through the explicit vocabulary of friendship. Generally, non-familial relationships involving men and women were regarded as socially unacceptable. Several didactic collections warned the reader not to trust a woman ever, since her company and presence would be deleterious and misleading. In the *Secreto de los secretos*, for example, one can read the admonition supposedly given by Aristotle to his disciple, Alexander the Great, about the risk of trusting women (as well as children) to keep any secrets.<sup>113</sup> Though rarely, women might outstand for their values and virtues; however, most of the relationships in which they were involved were presented as unachievable or proved extremely unstable.

To conclude, this general overview, aimed at outlining a brief history of friendship and at detecting its major interpretations and transformations across the Middle Ages, particularly in the Iberian Peninsula, constitutes an essential premise to outline a more complex taxonomy of those relationships as it emerges from the comparative analysis of the Alfonsine law-collection *Siete Partidas*, the Marian songs *Cantigas de Santa María* and the chronicle *Estoria de España*. Eventually, the narrative works of oriental origins discussed above, translated and re-elaborated in the Learned King's scriptorium, left an undeniable footprint in the later production. However, the presence of some original and exceptional Alfonsine features is undeniable, as the following chapters will illustrate.

<sup>112</sup> *Calila e Dimna*, p. 110.

<sup>113</sup> *Secreto de los Secretos*, ed. Philip B. Jones, *Scripta Humanistica* 117 (Washington: Potomac, 1990), p. 69; 84–85. For a more accurate analysis of friendship and gender relationship see Chapter 6.

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## Chapter 2

# Friendship in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile

### The Portrait of an *Ante Litteram* Ruler

#### *Alfonso X: The King*

Scholars interested in different fields and disciplines have consistently acknowledged the influence exerted by Alfonso X of Castile (r.1252–84) on the political events, as well as on the legal and cultural developments, which characterized the history of medieval Iberia.<sup>1</sup> His fame partially relied on his noble ancestry: the eldest son of Ferdinand III of Castile (r.1217–52), dubbed ‘el Santo’, and Beatriz of Swabia – Emperor Frederick II’s granddaughter – he was also Eleanor of Aquitaine’s (r.1162–1214) and Alfonso VIII of Castile’s (r.1158–1214) great grandson.<sup>2</sup> Alfonso X strategically married the Infanta Violante, thus becoming the son-in-law of James I of Aragon (r.1213–76), and also forged a bond with Portugal by giving his own daughter, Beatriz, in marriage to Alfonso III (r.1248–79). Alfonso X inherited his father’s prosperous

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Linehan, *Spain, 1157–1300: A Partible Inheritance* (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2008), pp. 106–214; H. Salvador Martínez, *Alfonso X, el Sabio: una biografía* (Madrid: Editorial Polifemo, 2003); Manuel González Jiménez, *Alfonso X el Sabio* (Barcelona: Ariel, 2004); Joseph F. O’Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the Cantigas de Santa María: A Poetic Biography* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Manuel González Jiménez, *Alfonso X el Sabio, 12521–284* (Palencia: Editorial La Olmeda, 1993); Joseph F. O’Callaghan, *The Learned King: The Reign of Alfonso X of Castile* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); *Emperor of Culture: Alfonso X the Learned of Castile and his Thirteenth-Century Renaissance*, ed. Robert I. Burns (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1990); *Alfonso X, el Sabio, vida, obra y época*, ed. Juan Carlos de Miguel Rodríguez, Angela Muñoz Fernández and Cristina Segura Graiño (Madrid: Sociedad Española de Estudios Medievales, 1989); John E. Keller, *Alfonso X, el Sabio* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967); Antonio Ballesteros-Beretta, *Alfonso X el Sabio* (Barcelona: Salvat, 1963); Evelyn S. Procter, *Alfonso X of Castile, Patron of Literature and Learning* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951; Westport: Greenwood Press, [1980]).

<sup>2</sup> Alfonso VIII won the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, which is considered the most emblematic victory in the ‘Reconquest’ of the Muslim South of the Peninsula.

and unified Christian kingdom in 1252, which he planned to enhance first by leading a series of crusades to seize the residual Islamic strongholds in the South of the Peninsula and those in Northern Africa (*fecho de allende*).<sup>3</sup> Second, he sought to obtain the title of Holy Roman Emperor, which he claimed by dint of his Germanic origins (*fecho del imperio*).<sup>4</sup>

The historical accounts concerning Alfonso X's reign inform us that he experienced extremes of both social and political instability, as well as conditions of splendour and fame, such as his coronation as *Rey de Romanos* in 1257. In the same year, he sought to increase Castilian control and presence over the Southern territories by breaking, if necessary, some of the vassalic alliances which his father had established with the Muslim rulers of the Southern enclaves in order to preserve his newly-acquired territories and to guarantee social order. In 1264 the emir of Granada, Muhammad I (r.1238–72), disregarded the vassalic agreement, which had connected him to the Castilian crown since 1246. Alfonso X was taken by surprise by the emir's volte-face and the attack which the latter helped to undertake against the Christian frontiers. No less dramatic was the secret organization of a Mudejar revolt, which flared up in Murcia and in the rest of Andalusia simultaneously. From 1265 the revolt was suppressed thanks to the support of Alfonso III of Portugal and James I of Aragon. Castilian authority prevailed, but in the process something was inevitably lost: the feudal links which had entrenched the Castilian monarch and the Muslim princes (his vassals, who swore loyalty in return for administrative rights and a resemblance of independence) were now replaced by new temporary and retractable agreements. Moreover, the rebellions had left a difficult situation to control; that is to say the Christian repopulation of the Southern territories, which had been abandoned by most of the Mudejar population once Granada lost its role of mediator.

Yet, in spite of the turmoil generated by such situations, for some of the political and administrative changes that Alfonso X favoured, he was regarded as an *ante litteram* regent. He endeavoured to promote a notion of authority based on the idea that sovereigns were *vicarios de Dios* (God's vicars) and that affairs could be separated into secular and spiritual domains, each ruled by the king and the Pope separately.<sup>5</sup> In his view, the king should occupy a central position in a

<sup>3</sup> In 1243 Alfonso X organized the campaign to seize Murcia; in 1248 he supported his father's campaign in Seville; he also took Jerez in 1253 and Niebla in 1262.

<sup>4</sup> Carlos Estepa, 'Alfonso X y el "fecho del imperio"', *Revista de Occidente*, 37 (1984): pp. 43–54.

<sup>5</sup> Gregory Peter Andrachuk, 'Alfonso el Sabio: Courtier and Legislator', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 9 (1983): pp. 439–49.

hierarchical system where all the other components had to participate actively, yet without ever undermining his royal supremacy. Those principles were no mere theorizations, but they materialized in a series of innovative juridical norms, which the king issued, enhanced or reformulated, and most of which obviated the previous *fueros* (municipal laws). An extensive part of the new legislation pulled the rug from underneath the magnates and the noble elites, for whom the ancient *fueros* represented the bulwarks of their privileges and superiority. Predominantly for this reason, they rebelled against the king in 1272, during the *Cortes* of Burgos. Although this was not the first time that the nobles had risen against Alfonso X, the previous upheavals had in reality come to nothing, since the leading motives had been mainly individual or familial claims. What changed in 1272 was that the aristocracy joined together in order to defend their group identity, threatened by the new royal impositions.

A step backwards is needed here to understand the sequence of events which led up to this rebellion. From 1255 to 1264 a series of political changes had been experienced; the legal code of the *Fuero Real* had been issued in numerous areas such as Old Castile, Extremadura, Transierra, the kingdoms of Toledo and Andalucia, while the royal treasury had invested heavily in the African campaigns, as well as in funding the *fecho del imperio*. Despite the fact that those campaigns were emptying the royal coffers, the nobles had not been directly affected. But things changed after the Mudejar revolt in 1264, when the nobles showed their impotence and loose organization in defending the territories under their control. Moreover, with the *Privilegio General de Extremadura*, in the same year, Alfonso X allowed the councils of that region to become direct vassals of the king and of his heirs, without the necessity to establish first a vassallic bond with some of the members of the high aristocracy. The nobles were losing their predominant positions, threatened by the new law, which was not withdrawn as they requested. Such tensions ineluctably exploded after the *Cortes* summoned in Burgos in 1272. This situation caused Alfonso X numerous hardships, which were finally overcome only when he softened his reforms, obliged by the fact that even the representatives of the Military Orders and others among his previous allies supported the rebels.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Most of those institutions experienced a process of aristocratization and their members gathered together in a solidary bond reflecting group identity. Carlos de Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII–XV)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons; Arganda del Rey, Madrid: Latorre Literaria, 2003); Carlos de Ayala Martínez, 'La monarquía y las Órdenes Militares durante el reinado de Alfonso X', *Hispania*, 178 (1991): pp. 409–65; Manuel González Jiménez, 'Relaciones de las Órdenes Militares con la corona castellana', *Historia Instituciones Documentos*, 18 (1991): pp. 209–22.

Political difficulties for the Castilian monarch also came from other directions, since his expansionist dream and desire for control were not limited to the Iberian territories exclusively. Alfonso X claimed, because of his mother's Hohenstaufen origins, the title of Holy Roman Emperor, which was offered to him in 1256 by the Pisan ambassador, Bandino di Guido Lancia, representative of the Ghibelline faction ruling the Republic of Pisa. Once Frederick II, Emperor of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, died in 1250, the throne passed to his son Conrad IV, but with his demise in 1254 the Pope had the opportunity to nominate William II of Holland to oppose the Ghibelline factions. On William's death, the Ghibellines of Pisa were able to gain some breathing space by investing Alfonso X with the title of *Rey de Romanos* and by signing an agreement according to which the Iberian monarch would defend and preserve their city against its enemies, in return for the city's loyalty and support of his cause. However, the situation in the Italian Peninsula was excessively complicated on a number of fronts, not least by the proliferation of competing powers, particularly the papacy and its networks of support. This was, in all likelihood, the principal reason for which Alfonso X never managed to achieve his goal, as demonstrated by the failure of his last interview with Pope Gregory X in 1275.

The events which characterized his reign, the fact that he had to go back on his reforms in order to preserve order and stability, the frustration of his imperialistic ambitions, the crisis for the succession to the throne and the deposition by his son Sancho IV (r.1284–95) in 1282, have all led his political management to be considered a failure.<sup>7</sup> Yet, in the cultural field he is renowned as a notable patron of the arts and sciences whose cultural authority not only went unchallenged, but endured long after his death.

### *An Artist among Artists: Visual, Musical and Architectural Projects*

Alongside his political duties, Alfonso X also claimed religious responsibilities as champion of Christianity, as well as occupying the intellectual and cultural position of *magister* and supervisor of outstanding literary, scientific, historic and juridical works produced in his royal chancery and scriptorium. The latter is a term which indicates simultaneously the physical place in which poets, translators, compilers, copyists and miniaturists worked, as well as, in a figurative sense, their co-participation in the same artistic school.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Cayetano J. Socarras, *Alfonso X of Castile: A Study on Imperialistic Frustration* (Barcelona: Hispam, 1976).

<sup>8</sup> *El Scriptorium alfonsí: de los Libros de astrología a las 'Cantigas de Santa María'*, ed. Jesús Montoya Martínez and Ana Domínguez Rodríguez (Madrid: Complutense Editorial, 1999).



The complex issue of authorship should be mentioned here, before embarking on the exploration of the production signed with the *sello real* (royal seal) of the Alfonsine court. The king was considered the material author of some of the literary pieces produced in his scriptorium, as well as the architect of their contents and structures, arranged in agreement with his collaborators, as also recorded by his nephew Juan Manuel:

... e avn, segunt dizen los que viuían a la su merced, que fablauan con él los que querían e quando él quería, e ansi auia espacio de estudiar en lo qué él quería fazer para sí mismo, e avn para veer e esterminar las cosas de los saberes quel mandaua ordenar a los maestros e a los sabios que traya para esto en su corte.<sup>9</sup>

[... and also, as witnessed by those who lived under his rule, all those who wanted could discuss with him whenever he desired, and in the same way, time was dedicated to study what he personally favoured, and also to see and select the subjects of the disciplines which he commissioned to the masters and the wise men, whom he brought at his court exactly for that reason.]

The image of the king-author appears in several Alfonsine works. An example is the *General Estoria* (I: 477b:2–5):

... el Rey faze un libro, non porque él escriua con sus manos, más porque compone las razones dél, e las enmienda, et yegua, e interesça, e muestra la manera de cómo se deuen fazer, e de sí escriue las qui él manda, pero dezimos por esta razón: el rey faze el libro.<sup>10</sup>

[... the king creates the book, not in the sense that he writes it out with his own hands, but rather that he assembles the arguments of it, and corrects and balances them and sets them right, and shows the way they ought to be presented; thereafter

<sup>9</sup> Juan Manuel, *Crónica abreviada*, in *Obras completas*, ed. José Manuel Blecua (2 vols, Madrid: Gredos, [1982]), pp. 575–76. See Prologue, pp. 573–77. English trans. mine.

<sup>10</sup> Alfonso X, *General estoria. Primera parte*, ed. Pedro Sánchez-Prieto Borja (Madrid: Fundación José Antonio de Castro, 2001); *General estoria. Segunda parte*, ed. Antonio G. Solalinde, Lloyd A. Kasten and Víctor R.B. Oelschläger (2 vols, Madrid: C.S.I.C. Instituto Miguel der Cervantes, 1957); *General estoria. Tercera parte*, ed. Pedro Sánchez-Prieto Borja and Bautista Horcajada Diezma (Madrid: Gredos, c.1994). English trans. mine. On the idea of king-author see also Jesús Montoya Martínez, 'El concepto de autor en Alfonso X', in *Estudios sobre la literatura y arte: dedicados al profesor Emilio Orozco Díaz*, ed. Nicolás Marín, Antonio Gallego Morell and Andrés Soria Olmedo (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1979), pp. 455–62.

they are written by whoever he designates, but we say for this reason that the king makes a book.]

The Learned King spread his artistic interests across a number of fields. Pictorial representations, miniatures, architecture and even music attracted his attention to the point that they were cultivated alongside his better-known narrative and lyrical production. The miniatures of the *Cantigas de Santa María* are a notable case in point. The importance of their adoption relied on the fact that miniatures tended to display an infinite series of aspects and peculiarities which the narration itself was inadequate to condense within its lines. Items of clothing, hair-styles and even the prosemic code according to which different characters behaved (gestures and positions that they assumed among themselves, for example) provided information on individuals, ethnic groups and their interactions.<sup>11</sup>

Not surprisingly, in the *Crónica General* (manuscript preserved in El Escorial Y-12-, fol. 1v), the *Lapidario* (El Escorial h.I.15 and h.I.16), the two versions of the *Cantigas de Santa María* (Escorial T. I. 1, fol. 5r and Escorial b. I. a, fol. 19r), the *General Estoria* (Vaticano, Urb. Lat. 539, fol. 2v), the *Siete Partidas* (British Museum, London, Add. 20 787, fol. 1v) and the *Libro de axedrez, dados y tablas* (Escorial T. I. 6, folios 1r, 1v, 65v, 72v) the image of the sovereign, in the act of dictating his works to his artist-fellows, occupies a central position.<sup>12</sup> The hierarchical distribution of the King's collaborators according to their ranks and functions is revealed by their dispositions and attitudes, as well as by the shape and colour of their garments.<sup>13</sup> Significantly, those miniatures go beyond the representation of a courtly environment, since they also portray scenes representing the lowest social strata.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal, *La España del siglo XIII: leída en imágenes* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1986).

<sup>12</sup> G. Menéndez Pidal, 'Cómo trabajaron las escuelas alfonsíes', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 4 (1951): pp. 363–80; G. Menéndez Pidal, *La España del siglo XIII leída en imágenes* (Madrid: Real Acedemia de la Historia, 1986), pp. 44–50.

<sup>13</sup> Another work which Alfonso X commissioned to translate and miniate is the *Cánones de Albateni* (Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 8322) cited in Menéndez Pidal, 'Las escuelas alfonsíes', p. 368.

<sup>14</sup> This is especially the case for the *Cantigas de Santa María*. Different hypotheses have been formulated about the place in which the manuscripts were illuminated; probably between Seville, Toledo and Murcia, cities where Alfonso X himself lived for prolonged periods. José Guerrero Lovillo, *Las cantigas: estudio arqueológico de sus miniaturas* (Madrid: CSIC, 1949), pp. 36–39. See also *Códice de los Cantares de Santa María* in Juan de Dios de la Rada y Delgado (ed.) *Museo español de antigüedades* (3 vols, 1874), p. 26.

Equally interesting are the musical annotations in the *Cantigas de Santa María*, although they have long been underestimated and remain complicated to reconstruct with precision. As for the pictorial and architectural devices, French musical models had a deep influence on the Castilian style. The European vogue for polyphony, for instance, was apparently well known at the Learned King's court and its study was imposed as part of the teaching at the University of Salamanca (established during the reign of Alfonso X's grandfather, Alfonso IX, in 1218). However, innovation coexisted with tradition, thus the old Visigothic rituals and performances were not altogether abandoned. Juan José Rey's study provides an idea of the purpose for which the music was conceived, who the performers were and what role the monarch played in the organization, support and performance of those secular and religious pieces.<sup>15</sup>

Besides the musical annotations in the *Cantigas de Santa María*<sup>16</sup> and the definition given in the *General Estoria*, in which the ability to sing and play is presented as one of the arts of the Quadrivium,<sup>17</sup> passion for music also appears in the official statements of the law in which it is revered as a potion to alleviate the troubles of life:

Alegrías hi ha otras sin las que deximos en las leyes ante desta, que fueron falladas para tomar home conorte en los pesares quando los hobiese: et estas son oir cantares et sones de estrumentos, jugar axedrez ó tablas, ó otros juegos semejantes destos.<sup>18</sup>

[There are other pleasures, in addition to those we mentioned in the preceding laws, which have been devised so that a man may take comfort when oppressed with care and affliction. These are listening to songs and musical instruments, and playing chess, draughts, or other similar games.]

<sup>15</sup> Juan José Rey, 'El Trovador don Alfonso X', *Revista de Occidente*, 37 (1984): pp. 166–83.

<sup>16</sup> *La música de las Cantigas de Santa María del Rey Alfonso el Sabio. I, Facsimil del código j.b.2 de El Escorial*, ed. Higinio Anglés (Barcelona: Diputación Provincial de Barcelona, Biblioteca Central, 1943, 1958, 1964).

<sup>17</sup> GE I:VII: XXVI–XXVII, 'Et es música ell arte que ensenna todas las maneras delos sones e las quantías delos puntos, assí como dixiemos; e esta arte es carrera para aprender a [a]cordar las voces e fazer sonar los estrumentos' [Music is the art which teaches all kinds of sounds and tones, as it has been said; this is the art through which one can learn to tune voices and to play instruments].

<sup>18</sup> SP II:V:XXI.

Nonetheless, the law also warns against its immoderate use:

Et maguer que cada una destas fuese fallada para bien, con todo eso no debe home dellas usar sinon en el tiempo que conviene, et de manera que haya ende pro et non daño.<sup>19</sup>

[Although each of them has been found to be beneficial, yet men should not make use of them, except at suitable times, and in a way that may be productive of benefit, and not of injury.]

Musical scripts, players, instruments and people in the act of dancing to those rhythms populated the miniatures which adorned numerous texts.<sup>20</sup> Court jesters, minstrels, troubadours, players and singers of different ages, gender and origins contributed to the pleasant and recreational atmosphere which Alfonso X promoted as a model for his own court.<sup>21</sup>

Like music, architecture also inspired royal patronage. Cómez Ramos focused on the significance of the monumental buildings which the sovereign commissioned as reminders of the glorious past of his dynasty, as symbols of his present political ambitions and as monuments to his claimed imperialistic achievements.<sup>22</sup> The Cathedral of Burgos, probably undertaken already under Ferdinand III and completed by his successor in 1260, and the Cathedral of León, commissioned by Alfonso X, are outstanding examples. The stateliness and majestic structure of the latter, in particular, has been acknowledged as an example of Gothic French art, but it was enriched with Iberian sculptures and meticulously decorated stained glass windows. The latter, for example, portrayed Alfonso X holding a globe in his hands: symbol of his claimed Imperial power.

While the Cathedral of León is estimated to be one of the foremost examples of the Alfonsine architectural achievements, one should also acknowledge the function of other minor religious constructions built in the Southern part of the Peninsula, mostly to replace Mudejar buildings and mosques. In the South the process of architectural conversion was inaugurated during the first stages of the 'Reconquest' under Ferdinand III, but it was with Alfonso X that it reached its nadir with the formulation of a canon of Gothic-Mudejar style, which would

<sup>19</sup> SP II:V:XXI.

<sup>20</sup> Menéndez Pidal, *La España leída en imágenes*, pp. 235–47.

<sup>21</sup> José Rey, 'El trovador Alfonso X', pp. 166–71.

<sup>22</sup> Rafael Cómez Ramos, 'La monarquía castellana y el arte gótico', in *Alfonso X y su época. El siglo del Rey Sabio*, ed. M. Rodríguez Llopis (Barcelona: Carroggio, 2001), pp. 285–315; Rafael Cómez Ramos, *Las empresas artísticas de Alfonso X el Sabio* (Sevilla: Diptuación Provincial, 1979).

endure until the following centuries.<sup>23</sup> The extraordinary combination of the two artistic paths – Gothic and Mudejar – which reflected the dialogue between the two coexisting cultures – is also seen in secular buildings, such as the Royal Palace in Toledo (Palacio de Galiana), the Real Alcázar in Seville and the castle of Torre Estrella in Medina Sidonia (built by the Order of Santa María de España). The same style was used in the construction of fortified walls and towers erected across Andalusia after the Mudejar upheaval in 1264 and in the defensive positions built by the Military Orders to protect those frontier territories.

Despite Alfonso X's personal attraction to artistic endeavours, the idea of 'art for art's sake', which would come to light only six centuries later, was inconceivable for a medieval mind used to look for deeper moral and didactic lessons explicitly or symbolically conveyed through those representations.<sup>24</sup> Since art was regarded as morally and didactically oriented, it is not surprising that the Alfonsine production was planned as a medium of communication and propaganda, in all likelihood constructed and manipulated in order to reach the largest possible audience. However, these artistic products were equally, or at least no less, the results of the natural inclination of a learned man who revealed a personal interest in refined aesthetic expressions.

### *The Transfer of Knowledge: Scientific and Literary Translations and Original Production at the Court of Alfonso X*

Translation was a consolidated activity skilfully, although not exclusively, practised in Toledo since 1085, when Alfonso VI (r.1065–1109) conquered the city, which was under Muslim rule. The Toledan School retained unchallenged fame, which was increased by the numerous oriental texts within its reach, and by the widespread common practice of translation among its bilingual population.<sup>25</sup> The Iberian Jewish community was particularly active in this field, as most of them were operating as translators from Arabic into Latin. From the twelfth century

<sup>23</sup> Jerrilynn D. Dodds, María Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Jerrilynn Dodds, 'The Mudejar Tradition in Architecture', in *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, ed. Salma Khadra Jayyusi, (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 592–98; Leopoldo Torres Balbás, *Ars hispaniae: historia universal del arte hispánico: arte almohade; arte nazari; arte mudéjar* (Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1949).

<sup>24</sup> Georges Duby, *Art et Société au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1997); Umberto Eco, *Arte e bellezza nell'estetica medievale* (Milano: Bompiani, 1987).

<sup>25</sup> Marie T. D'Averny, 'Translations and Translators', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable, with Carol D. Lanham (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 421–62.

the Toledan School attracted intellectuals and scholars from the rest of Europe, who were seduced by the fact that Greek philosophical, medical and scientific texts were available in either Arabic or Latin translations. Through the Cathedral library of Toledo, where these texts were kept to be consulted and studied, most of the oriental production reached a wider European cultural market.

Nonetheless, despite its importance, Toledo was not unique in the context of the Western Mediterranean. It was sided by the *Scuola Poetica Siciliana* in Palermo, patronized by Frederick II, Emperor of the Two Sicilies (c.1225–50),<sup>26</sup> himself familiar with Arabic language and culture. Works of philosophy, medicine, astrology, music and poetry, from both the Arabic world and the Andalusian context, were translated under his patronage. The result of this was that ‘for a time Frederick’s court was a serious challenge to Toledo as the centre of Arabic learning and translation in Europe’.<sup>27</sup>

Yet, the importance of translation which Toledo had maintained for nearly two centuries was neither wholly undermined by the neighbour *Scuola Poetica Siciliana* nor by the emergence of the Alfonsine scriptorium; as a matter of fact, its fame persisted until the fifteenth century. It has to be admitted, though, that when the royal court moved from Toledo to the South of the kingdom in 1253, although the primary objective was the *Repartimiento de Sevilla*,<sup>28</sup> when Alfonso X funded the *Estudios e Escuelas Generales de Latín e de Árábigo* in Seville in 1254 and in Murcia in 1269,<sup>29</sup> Toledo’s dominant position in the medieval universe of knowledge was threatened.

Significantly, the translations undertaken in the Alfonsine scriptorium differed radically from their Toledan precedents; mainly because they were rendered into the vernacular rather than into Latin. Many scholars and linguists have debated the definition given by Alfonso X of *Castellano drecho* as the first embryonic codification of a common peninsular language.<sup>30</sup> As Gonzalo Menéndez Pidal

<sup>26</sup> María Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), pp. 27–70; Antonino Pagliaro, *Poesia giullaresca e poesia popolare* (Bari: Laterza, 1958), see in particular the chapter ‘Riflessi di poesia araba in Sicilia’, pp. 233–47.

<sup>27</sup> María Rosa Menocal, ‘Pride and Prejudice in Medieval Studies: European and Oriental’, *Hispanic Review*, 53 (1985): pp. 61–78, at p. 75.

<sup>28</sup> The partition and grant of lands in the territories of Seville and Andalusia amongst those Christians who had helped Ferdinand III in the ‘Reconquest’ of the South.

<sup>29</sup> Juan Torres Fontes, ‘La cultura murciana en el reinado de Alfonso X’, *Murgetana*, 14 (1960): pp. 57–90; Juan Torres Fontes, ‘Precedentes universitarios murcianos en el reinado de Alfonso X: un estudio en el siglo XIII’, *Industria y Comercio*, 5 (1966): pp. 11–12.

<sup>30</sup> David Rojinsky, *Companion to Empire: A Genealogy of the Written Word in Spain and New Spain, c.550–1550* (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2010); Inés Fernández-Ordóñez,

argued, Alfonso X was the first to understand that the vernacular could be used as a language itself and not just as a tool of language transposition.<sup>31</sup> Alfonso X commissioned his works to be compiled in the languages of the Iberian Peninsula – mainly, but not exclusively, Galician-Portuguese for the lyrics and Castilian for the prose – probably in the attempt to make those texts available to a wider audience. However, the extent to which Alfonso X was operating with a specific linguistic policy in mind is debatable. Particularly interesting in this respect is the very recent discovery of a bifolio of the *Siete Partidas* in Galician-Portuguese, which was found in September 2012 between the pages of the *Libro del Ayuntamiento de Pontevedra* (1573–75).<sup>32</sup> The fragment has been dated from post-1265. Apart from carefully reconsidering the too simplistic statement that Galician-Portuguese was the language of poetry exclusively, this exciting discovery seems to suggest first, that the main concern was to make the law understood by all the subjects across the royal dominions, taking into account that most subjects spoke local languages. Second, as only further analysis of this fragment would prove, if a complete translation of the *Siete Partidas* into Galician-Portuguese was in fact commissioned and approved by the royal chancery, then the hypothesis that Alfonso X had a clear homologizing linguistic policy in mind would lose strength.

When considering the Alfonsine vernacular translations, two distinctions should be made: a first group, including the *Lapidario*, were undertaken during Alfonso X's youth, from 1250. A second phase, dedicated to the recompilation and co-ordination of broader collections, is thought to have begun in 1269 and continued until the end of his reign in 1284. The typologies of texts which the monarch ordered to be translated were numerous. Examples of this are the didactic short stories, usually arranged according to the *mise-en-abîme* technique, such as *Calila e Dimna* (carried out in the same period during which

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‘Alfonso X en la historia del español’, in *Historia de la lengua española*, ed. Rafael Cano (Barcelona: Ariel, 2004) pp. 381–422; Anthony J. Cárdenas, ‘Alfonso X nunca escribió *Castellano Drecho*’, *Actas de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas*, X (1989): pp. 151–59; Rafael Cano Aguilar, ‘Castellano ¿drecho?’, *Verba*, 12 (1985): pp. 287–302; Rafael Lapesa, *Historia de la lengua española*, 9th edn (Madrid: Gredos, 1983), pp. 237–47.

<sup>31</sup> Menéndez Pidal, ‘Cómo trabajaron las escuelas alfonsíes’, pp. 363–80.

<sup>32</sup> The bifolio is currently preserved in the Museum of Pontevedra, Galicia. Pictures are available at [www.museo.depo.es/noticias/notas.de.prensa/es.02010387.html#](http://www.museo.depo.es/noticias/notas.de.prensa/es.02010387.html#) (last accessed 19 June 2014). Moreover, reference of this appears in the Bibliografía de Textos Antigos Galegos e Portugueses database offers a union catalogue for all texts originally composed in Portuguese, Galician-Portuguese, and Galician, or translated into those languages during the medieval period. See [http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/philobiblon/bitagap\\_en.html](http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/philobiblon/bitagap_en.html) (last accessed 19 June 2014).



his brother Fadrique supported the translation of the original Sanskrit, and later Arabic versions, of *Sendebār* or *Libro de los engannos et los assayamientos de las mugeres*).<sup>33</sup> Another interesting example, which is believed to have been undertaken in the Learned King's scriptorium, although no original Alfonsine manuscript has survived, is the narrative translation reporting Muhammad's journey in the afterlife.<sup>34</sup> Whether the idea of an oneiric-allegorical journey, reserved to individuals endowed with a special sensitivity, entered the Western tradition thanks to this Alfonsine translation or it arrived through other channels, such as Dante's *Divina Commedia* is debateable. However, these two Eurocentric interpretations of the same oriental myth show similarities, which would suggest mutual influence.<sup>35</sup>

The stream of oriental knowledge did not flow exclusively through literary translations, but included astronomical and astrological treatises, the introduction of which into the Castilian court provoked curiosity and interest, which remained unchallenged for centuries. The astronomical *summa* entitled *Tablas Alfonsíes* is perhaps the epitome of such scientific achievements: probably edited in Toledo in 1272 by Judah ben Moses ha-Cohen and Isaac ben Cid, the compendium was internationally appreciated thanks to its Latin version produced at the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The *Tablas* represented, as their appellation of *summa* suggests, an anthological redaction within which other works, previously translated into Castilian, were inserted, such as the *Liber Picatrix* (1256),<sup>37</sup> the *Libro de las Cruces* (1259) by a certain Ubaid Allāh, and other compendia such as the Ptolemy's *Quadripartitum*, its commentary by

<sup>33</sup> On *mise-en-abîme* see Chapter 1, p. 33, footnote 99.

<sup>34</sup> The only surviving version is the French manuscript *Livre de leschiele Mahomet* (MS. Laud Misc. 537) dated from the second half of the thirteenth century. It is very difficult to establish a precise date of the work. The *Setenario* (written before 1256) reports the existence of 'un libro a que llaman en aráuigo Amôcherch' [a book named Amôcherch in Arabic], without specifying that the Arabic book had been translated into the vernacular. Procter, *Alfonso X*, p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Enrico Cerulli, *Il Libro della Scala e la questione delle fonti arabo-spagnole della Divina Commedia* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1949); Enrico Cerulli, *Nuove ricerche sul Libro della Scala e la conoscenza dell' Islam in occidente* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1972).

<sup>36</sup> The translation of *Libro de los caminos y de los reinos* (cited in the *General estoria*) was also created with a similar task of geographical orientation.

<sup>37</sup> A few fragments of a subsequent Latin version survived and they are preserved in the Vatican Library. In all likelihood the title originated from the name-sake author.



Alī ibn Ridwān (Abenrodianus) and the *Libro de los Juicios de las Estrellas* by Alī Ibn ‘Abī-l-Rijāl (Abenragel).<sup>38</sup>

The *Lapidario* and *Libro de las Formas*, less focused on abstract essences, deal with the peculiarities of natural elements, including advice on the propitious moments to extrapolate and use their properties.<sup>39</sup> Another Alfonsine compendium is the *Libro del saber de astronomía* – the original title of which should have been *Libro del saber de astrología*, according to the same Prologue – comprising 15 chapters of which only the first concerns the celestial settings, while the rest supplies technical indications to construct astronomical tools.<sup>40</sup> The work is an organized collation of previously detached and unbound translations undertaken between 1255 and 1259, finalized in 1276. Despite the attempt to edit a *miscellanea*, this work was underestimated by contemporaries and remained unpublished until the nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup>

Alongside astrology and astronomy, Alfonso X was also drawn to astral magic.<sup>42</sup> Such combined interests would probably justify the drafting of the *Liber Razielis*, regarded as one of the most complete examples of Judaic Cabalistic literature preserving the original sevenfold division that legend traditionally attributed to Solomon.<sup>43</sup> The text provides indications for the performances of ceremonial rituals; in particular, it indicates the procedure to invoke supernatural intervention from the angels who, according to medieval belief, commanded astral movements.

<sup>38</sup> Translated into Latin as *Liber magnus et completus de iudiciis astrologiae*.

<sup>39</sup> Several theories have been elaborated about the ‘identities’ of the two texts, however, the one proposed by Alejandro García Avilés, despite some incongruent details, seems to be one of the most valid. He asserted that the *Libro de las Formas* was the index of an entire work whose only surviving part was the *Lapidario*. The latter was translated for the first time into Castilian by Judá ben Mosca and Garci Pérez in 1250. For more details: Alejandro García Avilés, ‘Alfonso X y la tradición de la magia astral’, in *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, ed. Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, pp. 83–103, at pp. 96–97.

<sup>40</sup> There are several surviving manuscripts of the *Libro del Saber de Astrología*, each of them fragmentary; Anthony J. Cárdenas, ‘The Complete *Libro del Saber de astrología* and Cod. Vat. Lat. 8174’, *Manuscripta*, 22 (1981): pp. 14–22. See also Fernando Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la Prosa Medieval Castellana, I, La creación del discurso prosístico: el entramado cortesano* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1998), pp. 597–601.

<sup>41</sup> Alfonso X, *Libros del saber de astronomía del rey d. Alfonso X de Castilla*, ed. M. Rico y Sinobas (5 vols, Madrid: Tipografía de Eusebio Aguado, 1863–67); Alfonso X, *Libros del saber de astronomía de Alfonso X* (Barcelona: Planeta-Agostini, 1999) [facsimil of Ms. 156 of the Biblioteca de la Universidad Complutense, ed. Manuel Rico y Sinobas.]

<sup>42</sup> García Avilés, ‘Alfonso X y la tradición de la magia astral’, pp. 83–103.

<sup>43</sup> Juan Manuel, *Libro de la caza*, in *Obras completas*, Blecua, p. 519; Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, p. 91.

This phase, dominated by the labour of scientific translation and original redactions, also witnessed the production of works of recreational value, such as the *Libro de axedrez, dados e tablas*,<sup>44</sup> finished in 1283 and now kept in El Escorial. The text is even more remarkable on account of its 152 miniatures, which visually represent the process of fabrication of the book itself, the way in which games were played and the different peoples who amused themselves with those ludic activities.

### *The King Troubadour and His Poetic Labour*

The title of troubadour king attributed to Alfonso X finds its justification in the lyrical compositions which are believed to have been composed, ideated or organized by the King as far as the contents, metrical form and style are concerned. Alfonso X supported the poetic *escuela gallego-portuguesa*, whose name foreshadows the existence of parallel features with the contemporary school at the court of Alfonso III of Portugal. Galician-Portuguese represented the common code of multicultural interaction and transmission of different poetic tendencies which converged within the Alfonsine scriptorium. As Milagro Laín argued, such a regional spoken language was to become the literary *koiné* of the Peninsula, overcoming its originally restrictive geographical boundaries.<sup>45</sup>

Following both literary trends and his own tastes and inclinations, Alfonso X supported a poetic production which developed into two divergent directions: secular and religious poetry. The secular poems, which number 44 in total (of which 35 are thought to be Alfonso's own contribution), are subdivided into two main groups: 39 satirical poems, which include 35 songs of *escarnio* and *maldezir* and four *tenzones* (invectives and debates between the interlocutors).<sup>46</sup> A second group comprises five love songs, of which four are *cantigas de amor*

<sup>44</sup> Alfonso X, *Libro de axedrez, dados e tablas* (2 vols, Patrimonio Nacional: Coeditores Vicent García Editores, Valencia [y] Ediciones Poniente, Madrid, 1987).

<sup>45</sup> Milagro Laín, 'La poesía profana de Alfonso X', *Revista de Occidente*, 37 (1984): pp. 145–65. See also p. 51 and footnote 30 of this chapter.

<sup>46</sup> *Cantigas de escarnio* were satirical poems based on allusions and euphemisms aimed at conveying criticisms and attacks against someone or something; *cantigas de maldezir*, instead, were unequivocal and direct invectives against a specific target. See Juan Salvador Paredes Nuñez, 'Las cantigas de escarnio y maldecir de Alfonso X: problemas de interpretación y crítica textual', *Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar*, 22 (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 2000); K. Scholberg, *Sátira e invectiva en la España medieval* (Madrid: Gredos, 1971), pp. 50–137; *Cantigas d'escarnho e de mal dizer: dos cancioneros medievais galego-portugueses*, ed. M. Rodrigues Lapa, 2nd edn (Vigo: Galaxia, 1970).

(courtly poems based on the model of the Provençal *canço*) and only one is a *cantiga de amigo*, a song dedicated to the absent lover by a supposed female voice.<sup>47</sup> It is unlikely that the Learned King was the author of any of the *cantigas de amigo*, but his authorship of at least three of the *cantigas de amor* is considered probable.<sup>48</sup>

It is particularly significant that, especially in the *cantigas de escarnio*, characters and events are very often historically identifiable. Particularly noteworthy are the satirical poems admonishing the Christian knights who had failed to defend the frontiers with Islam.<sup>49</sup> Those poems resemble the expression of the medieval *carnevalesque*, a technique based on the portrayal of a grotesque reality through word-games aimed ultimately at subverting any hierarchical rule and at imposing a new fictional order. What is unusual, in this particular context, is that the King himself, as the representative of the institution which that kind of literature sought to subvert, condoned its production. An explanation may be found, as Dámaso Alonso suggested, in the complex aspects which had been coexisting for centuries in the Peninsular literary and historical contexts – the folkloric elements combined with higher courtly standards, a synthesis metaphorically equated to *Escila y Caribdis*<sup>50</sup> – or by the fact that literature was considered a strategic, maieutic and cathartic vent for human passions which, if not sublimated, could turn into social unrest.

Leaving the secular production aside, particular attention should be devoted to the *Cantigas de Santa María* (henceforth *CSM*), considered by many the expression of Alfonso's personal devotion and the most exhaustive example of Iberian narrative and lyric production dedicated to the Virgin Mary. All the songs are written in Galician-Portuguese and follow the troubadour style, but here the traditional features of courtly love poetry transcend the mundane and address, instead, the divinity herself. The Marian collection is estimated to include about 427 canticles, albeit a rather arbitrary number prone to variation according to the different versions.<sup>51</sup> It is also considered to be a milestone in

<sup>47</sup> William D. Paden, 'Principles of Generic Classification in the Medieval European Lyric: The Case of Galician-Portuguese', *Speculum*, 81 (2006): pp. 76–97.

<sup>48</sup> Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso, 'Alfonso X el Sabio, poeta profano e mariano', in *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, ed. Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, pp. 149–58.

<sup>49</sup> The subject originated an entire 'circle' of poems centred on this subject (*CSM* 2, 6, 9, 16, 21, 24, 26).

<sup>50</sup> Dámaso Alonso, *Ensayos sobre la poesía española* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1944), pp. 1–27.

<sup>51</sup> For a clarifying overview see *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. Walter Mettman (3 vols, Madrid: Castalia, 1986–88), vol. 1, pp. 7–42. See also: Valeria Bertolucci Pizzorusso, 'Primo contributo all'analisi delle varianti redazionali nelle *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Cobras e*

medieval monophonic production since it was the first before 1300 to appear with accurate musical annotations.<sup>52</sup> Its verses, music and miniatures generate a complete artistic and religious manual with a threefold impact – verbal, visual and melodic – which made of it an appropriate liturgical and didactic instrument both in acts of personal devotion and in collective performances.<sup>53</sup>

The entire collection respects a regular pattern in which, besides the introduction and the two prologues, every tenth song is a religious hymn in praise of the Virgin (*loor*).<sup>54</sup> The miracle tales, the hymns and the numerous miniatures in the text (in MS T there are six panels to illustrate each *cantiga*, while every fifth has 12 illuminated panels) present a striking portrait of medieval Iberian society. Elements from the French, German, English, Portuguese and Islamic traditions – imported by the artists who gathered at the Alfonsine court – are identifiable

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*Son: Papers on the Text, Music and Manuscripts of the 'Cantigas de Santa María'*, ed. Stephen Parkinson (Oxford: European Humanities Research Centre, 2001), pp. 106–18; Martha E. Schaffer, 'The "Evolution" of the *Cantigas de Santa María*: The Relationships Between MSS T, F and E', in Parkinson, *Cobras e Son*, pp. 186–213; Parkinson, 'The First Reorganization of the *Cantigas de Santa María*', *Bulletin of the Cantigueiros de Santa María*, 1 (1988): pp. 91–97.

<sup>52</sup> For an introduction see Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, 'Claves de retórica musical para la interpretación y transcripción del ritmo de las Cantigas de Santa María', in *Literatura y cristiandad: homenaje al profesor Jesús Montoya*, ed. Antonio Rafael Rubio Flores, María Luisa Dañobeitia Fernández and Manuel José Alonso García, (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2001), pp. 685–718; Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, 'Las *Cantigas de Santa María*. La música y su interpretación', in *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, pp. 347–59; Israel J. Katz, 'Higinio Anglés and the Melodic Origins of the *Cantigas de Santa María*: A Critical View', in *Alfonso X of Castile, the Learned King (1221–1284): An International Symposium, Harvard University, 17 November 1984*, ed. Francisco Márquez-Villanueva and Carlos Alberto Vega (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1990), pp. 46–75; David Wulstan, 'The Rhythmic Organization of the *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Cobras e Son*, Parkinson, pp. 31–65; Gerardo V. Huseby, 'Musical Analysis and Poetic Structure in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Florilegium Hispanicum: Medieval and Golden Age Studies Presented to Dorothy Clotelle Clarke*, ed. John S. Geary, Dorothy Clotelle Clarke, Charles Faulhaber and Dwayne E. Carpenter, (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1983), pp. 81–101.

<sup>53</sup> Richard P. Kinkade, 'Scholastic Philosophy and the Art of the *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Studies on the Cantigas de Santa María: Art, Music and Poetry: Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Cantigas de Santa María of Alfonso X, el Sabio (1221–1284)*, ed. I.J. Katz and J.E. Keller (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1987), pp. 95–109.

<sup>54</sup> The value of the *loors* as a means to homologize the collection through Alfonso X's poetic persona is further explored in Joseph Snow, 'The Central Role of the Troubadour Persona of Alfonso X in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 56 (1979): pp. 305–16.

throughout the entire collection.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, the considerable number of biblical references and the presence of abundant historical, geographical, political and folkloristic elements enriched the narration with a realistic tone which, as some critics have argued, have enhanced modern readers' ability to understand, or at least to imagine, Iberian medieval life.<sup>56</sup>

A degree of scholarly attention has been devoted to the thorny issues of authorship, dating and sources of the *CSM*; questions which in part still remain unanswered. About authorship, Walter Mettmann proposed three likely conclusions: first, most of the *cantigas* were written by a certain Airas Nunes, collaborator-poet and coordinator of the Alfonsine scriptorium.<sup>57</sup> Second, other poets, coming from various geographical and literary contexts, contributed to the elaboration or translation of the miracles to the point of overshadowing Nunes's eminent role. Third, the authorship of Alfonso X cannot be ruled out for at least a group of *cantigas*, narrated in the first person and easily recognizable for their style and themes, recounting episodes personally experienced by the sovereign.<sup>58</sup> Whether the King was the material author of other *loors*, supported or not by other poets, is debateable, although there are elements which would suggest so.<sup>59</sup> Open to discussion is also the list of sources upon which some of

<sup>55</sup> Alongside the influence of the French troubadours, the German cultural tradition introduced by Isabel of Swabia, Alfonso X's mother, deserves a mention. See, for example, *CSM* 74 'Como Santa María guareceu o pintor que o demo quisera matar porque o pintava feo' (How Holy Mary protected the painter whom the demon wished to slay because he painted him ugly). According to Keller, the well-known proverb 'never paint the devil on the wall', of clear German origin, inspired the miracle. See Keller, *Alfonso X, el Sabio*, pp. 73–4.

<sup>56</sup> John Keller and Annette Grant Cash, *Daily Life Depicted in the Cantigas de Santa María* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1998).

<sup>57</sup> Nunes' name was found in the manuscript E, between two columns of *CSM* 223. About the identity of other possible collaborators working in Alfonso X's scriptorium see Antonio Ballesteros, 'Sevilla en el siglo XIII', *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, 66 (1915): pp. 50–53. See also Walter Mettmann, 'Algunas observaciones sobre la génesis de la colección de las *Cantigas de Santa María* y sobre el problema del autor', in *Studies on the Cantigas*, Katz and Keller, pp. 355–66.

<sup>58</sup> *CSM* 169, 180, 200, 209, 279, 300, 360, 401, 406. Further details in the introduction to the *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. Walter Mettmann, pp. 17–20; Mettmann, 'Algunas observaciones sobre las *Cantigas de Santa María*', pp. 355–66; Anthony Cárdenas, 'A Study of Alfonso's Role in Selected *Cantigas* and the Castilian Prosification of Escorial Codex T.I.1', in Katz and Keller, *Studies on the Cantigas*, pp. 253–68; J. Snow, 'A Chapter in Alfonso X's Personal Narrative: The Puerto de Santa María Poems in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', *La Corónica*, 8 (1979): pp. 10–21; Antonio G. Solalinde, 'Intervención de Alfonso X en la redacción de sus obras', *Revista de Filología Española*, 2 (1915): pp. 283–88.

<sup>59</sup> Martin G. Cunningham, *Alfonso X El Sabio, Cantigas de Loor* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2000), pp. 17–18. See also Jesús Montoya Martínez, 'Algunas

the *cantigas* might have relied, as well as their dating, although 1257 and 1283 have been suggested as two likely *ante* and *post quem* dates.<sup>60</sup>

The *CSM* found solid ground in the recovery and manipulation of other European Marian legends and, more generally, of a widely diffused Marian cult, which was rooted in the belief that restoration, pleasure, aid and security were offered by the Holy Mother as rewards for those who offered her their genuine devotion.<sup>61</sup> With the expansion of the plan of the work – from its original hundred songs of undeniable European influences to the final 400 or so – the collection assumed a progressively increasing Iberian dimension.<sup>62</sup> In fact, in the retrospectively-added 300 *cantigas*, the focus shifts onto the description of the daily life of Iberian subjects and onto the sovereign's personal dimension and experiences, as epitomized in the *cantigas de loor*. Each *loor* represented the lyrical expression of the sovereign's individual claims for salvation,<sup>63</sup> while secular versification and the metrical structures of the art of *troubar* were adopted to worship the worthiest lover – the Virgin Mary – who was also 'the exemplification of the perfect qualities of womanhood'.<sup>64</sup> The result is a collection which is revered as the sovereign's spiritual and 'poetic' biography – as O'Callaghan defined it – as well as a model of Christian and moral devotion for its contemporary readers.

The first manuscript of the *CSM* (probably dated 1270, but not later than 1280) was To (Toledo MS), which anthologized 128 songs, including a selection of *loors* appearing at the end of each decade of miracles.<sup>65</sup> The other two preserved

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precisaciones acerca de las *Cantigas de Santa María*', in Katz and Keller, *Studies on the Cantigas*, pp. 355–86; David Wulstan, 'The Compilation of the *Cantigas* of Alfonso el Sabio', in Parkinson, *Cobras e Son*, pp. 154–85; Roger D. Tinnell, 'Authorship and Composition: Music and Poetry in *Las Cantigas de Santa María*', *Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, 28 (1981): pp. 189–98.

<sup>60</sup> Montoya Martínez, 'Algunas precisiones', pp. 374–8.

<sup>61</sup> Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London: Allen Lane, and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1985).

<sup>62</sup> Joseph Snow, 'Self-Conscious References and the Organic Narrative Pattern of the *Cantigas de Santa María* of Alfonso X', in Joseph R. Jones (ed.), *Medieval Renaissance and Folklore Studies in Honour of John Esten Keller* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1980), pp. 53–66.

<sup>63</sup> Snow, 'The Troubadour Persona of Alfonso X', pp. 305–16.

<sup>64</sup> Keller, *Alfonso X el Sabio*, p. 79. More details about the versification at pp. 788–3.

<sup>65</sup> The name of the MS To derived from the Cathedral of Toledo, place in which the manuscript was originally preserved, although it is currently kept in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. The manuscript presents an introductory poem ('*Pregón*'), an index, a series of 100 miracles songs followed by one '*pitición*' and three further appendixes containing respectively five *Cantigas das Fiestas de Santa María* (Songs for the Feast-Days of the Holy



manuscripts, T or 'Códice Rico' which is kept in El Escorial and F (Florence Codex) were re-elaborations. The first is a richly illuminated codex of 256 folios containing 192 songs of which three have been lost.<sup>66</sup> The second, regarded as complementary to codex T, is evidently an unfinished redaction since it contains only 104 poems lacking numeration and space for musical annotations. The apparently most complete codex, which embodies the *summa* between T and the enhanced, but unfinished, project of F, is the manuscript E (Escorial) or *Códice de los músicos*, which presents 361 illuminated folios containing 400 numbered and musically endowed *cantigas*.<sup>67</sup> Translations and critical editions began to appear only in the last century. Noteworthy are Mettmann's second edition of the *CSM*, as well as an English translation by Kulp-Hill.<sup>68</sup>

### *The Creation of History*

The chronicles *Estoria de España* and *General Estoria* (henceforward *EE* and *GE* respectively) were two major encyclopaedic and didactic projects carried out in the Alfonsine scriptorium. Their contents are respectively a chronological record of the events which occurred under the rule of the peoples who dominated the Iberian Peninsula from its origin up to the reign of Ferdinand III, and the ambitious project of a universal global history. Both works remained

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Mary), five *Cantigas das Festas de Nostro Sennor* (Songs for the Feast-Days of Our Lord) and 16 miscellaneous poems.

<sup>66</sup> *CSM* 40, 150 and 151 have been lost, but the original structure included them; in fact all the songs are numbered from 1 to 195, even if only 192 have been preserved. The folios (48.5 cm x 32.5 cm) consist of the introductory 'Pregón', the song-prologue, a fragment of the index and the *Cantiga de Nostro Sennor*.

<sup>67</sup> Of the 400 *cantigas*, nine are repeated. A complete index is included, together with the introductory 'Pregón', the *Cantiga-Prólogo*, the 'Pitiçon' and other texts without musical annotations, for a total amount of 414 lyrical pieces.

<sup>68</sup> The first official version, with a learned introduction into Castilian, and a glossary of all the terms appearing in the Galician-Portuguese originals, was elaborated by Walter Mettmann between 1959 and 1972. A second reprint in two volumes followed in 1981, by Edición Xerais, which preceded a second and more accurate edition containing the result of Mettmann's ongoing research in the late 1980s. In the *Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. Walter Mettmann (3 vols, Madrid: Castalia, 1986–89) the glossary – which originally included all the terms, proper names and verb lists – includes only the words which differ from modern Portuguese. The introduction is enriched with additional critical notes and some corrections have been made by referring to MS E (Escorial J.b.2.) as a guideline for emendations. For an English translation: *Songs of Holy Mary of Alfonso X, the Wise: A Translation of the Cantigas de Santa María*, ed. Kathleen Kulp-Hill, with an introduction by Connie L. Scarborough (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2000).

unfinished, either because of their over-ambitious scope or, in the specific case of the *EE*, because it was interrupted once the more challenging enterprise of the *GE* began. However, it is possible that both these projects were carried out simultaneously by compilers familiar with the same sources, as the wide range of similarities between the two works suggests.<sup>69</sup>

These two historiographical *compendia* were accurately organized to suit thirteenth-century royal exigencies. First of all, by suggesting a potential connection between the glorious heroic past and his own deeds, Alfonso X sought to legitimize his ruling position and his claim for the Imperial crown. Second, the compilers might have sought to make these *compendia* accessible and understandable to a wider public by inserting well-known events into a narrative frame in which episodes were self-contained and consequently intelligible, even in isolation.<sup>70</sup> The adoption of the vernacular added a realistic dimension to such heroic accounts, which made of those chronicles the first written history in the language of Castile.<sup>71</sup> According to Leonardo Funes, the *EE* was also a fundamental tool for the recovery and transmission of knowledge in a time in which the development of the paper industry contributed to re-shape the practices and purposes of writing.<sup>72</sup>

The challenge for the Alfonsine team was to achieve an optimal combination in which all the available sources would converge into a coherent and reliable version. In cases of multiple and different narrations of the same event, the version preferred by the compilers was given as the main text, while the other

<sup>69</sup> Inés Fernández Ordóñez demonstrated that the elaboration or emendation of some parts of the *EE* were still in progress during the last years of Alfonso X's reign; consequently 1275 (the dating established by previous critics) cannot be accepted as the time of interruption of the work. See *Versión crítica de la 'Estoria de España': estudio y edición desde Pelayo hasta Ordoño II*, ed. Inés Fernández Ordóñez (Madrid: Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal, 1993), pp. 22–25. The two compilations probably relied on the same translations and historical materials, among which the *compendia* by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, Lucas de Tuy, Sigebert Gembloux, St Jerome, Hugh of Pisa, Pompeyo Trogo, Justinus, Orosius, Lucan, Pliny, Ovid and Paul the Deacon. Inés Fernández Ordóñez, 'El taller historiográfico alfonsí. La *Estoria de España* y la *General estoria* en el marco de las obras promovidas por Alfonso el Sabio', in Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, pp. 105–26.

<sup>70</sup> Charles F. Fraker, *The Scope of History: Studies in the Historiography of Alfonso el Sabio* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 1–43.

<sup>71</sup> Ignacio Soldevila-Durante, 'Un ejemplo de perspectivismo en la prosa historiográfica alfonsí', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 9 (1983): pp. 477–85, at p. 481; *Primera crónica general*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal (Madrid: Gredos, 1977), appendix, pp. 885–7.

<sup>72</sup> Leonardo Funes, *El modelo historiográfico alfonsí*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 6 (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 1997), pp. 13–19.



variants were added as secondary references. Conversely, where the consulted versions were not totally dissimilar, all the variants were combined into one account.<sup>73</sup> The discussion on the reliability of the sources and the reconstruction of the historical truth appears already in the *EE*:

Mas los escriptos son muchos et cuentanlo de muchas guisas, por que la uerdad de la estorias a las uezes es dubdosa, e por ende el que lee cre meta mientes como de las meiores escripturas tome lo que deue prouar et leer.<sup>74</sup>

[But the written records are many and they narrate things differently, because the historical truth is sometimes uncertain; for this reason the reader has to be wise in deciding what is reliable even in the best writings.]

Furthermore, while there was abundance of sources concerning biblical, ancient and pre-Roman history, for contemporary medieval events information was scattered and defective.<sup>75</sup> Together with such a discrepancy of sources, there were differences perhaps generated by the fact that different compilers might have worked in separate locations, being in most cases unaware of the other teams' progresses on the same project.

In terms of structure, in the chronological framework of the *EE*, events are marked in years of a ruler's dominion; particularly, of the most eminent and influent *sennores* (lords) of Iberia. The traditional and fragmentary annalistic structure was abandoned in favour of what Fernández-Ordóñez defined as a coherent succession of autonomous narrative units linked together by one central character's deeds and experiences.<sup>76</sup> Heroic legendary lords, such as Hercules and Alexander, became *exempla* of rulership and moral behaviour. Alfonso X presented himself as the vicar of God and the legitimate heir of the Holy Roman emperors, reinforcing the idea of history as *theosis*.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the

<sup>73</sup> Fernández Ordóñez, 'La historiografía alfonsí y post-alfonsí en sus textos – nuevo panorama', *Cahiers de Linguistique Hispanique Médiévale*, 181–9 (1993–94): pp. 101–32.

<sup>74</sup> *EE* 571.

<sup>75</sup> As far as the *EE* is concerned, such a disparity would partly justify the different extension and characteristics of the two parts in which the work is clearly divided.

<sup>76</sup> Fernández-Ordóñez, 'El taller historiográfico alfonsí', pp. 105–26.

<sup>77</sup> This was part of the 'philosophical anthropology' promoted by John Scottus Eriugena, according to which a privileged individual could be chosen to be the earthly representation of the divine will. James F. Burke, 'Alfonso X and the Structuring of Spanish History', *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 9 (1985): pp. 464–76.

centrality of Roman history to define an Iberian common heritage, implicitly allowed the Learned King to define himself as the scion of an Imperial dynasty.<sup>78</sup>

The *EE* depicts the evolution of the Iberian lineage, from its Herculean origins, followed by the influence of the Northern *almujuzes* (so defined by the Arabic chronicles), the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Germanic tribes and finally the Goths, whose noble roots were believed to have left their footprints in the royal dynasty from which Alfonso X descended.<sup>79</sup> The Arabs were not catalogued among the ruling groups which determined the development of the peninsular history, as they were blamed for undermining the noble power of the Visigoths. During the first stages of the Christian 'Reconquest', the newly born kingdom of León claimed its power in the name of its Visigothic origin by promoting an inheritance which would have allowed the Leonese king to retake Toledo together with all the other usurped territories. Unlike the kingdom of León, Castile had neither the long-standing nor stable independent history which Alfonso X was trying to grant it.<sup>80</sup> In fact, Castile had become a kingdom only in 1037, but it experienced periodic dynastic instability, being finally united to the neighbouring kingdom of León in 1230, under Ferdinand III.

Probably for such a relatively recent 'past', epic literary accounts populated the historical chronicles of Castile. Moreover, as Menéndez Pidal argued, the paraphrases and insertion of those songs into the Alfonsine historical accounts contributed to save the poetic history of Castile from oblivion.<sup>81</sup> The pages of the *EE*, partly or entirely, recovered the fictional prose of *La condesa traidora*, the *Romance de los siete infantes de Lara*, the song of the *Infante García*, the *Poema de Fernán González*, the narrations concerning the achievements of Bernardo del Carpio and Mainete, as well as a large and detailed section dedicated to the

<sup>78</sup> Charles Fraker, 'Alfonso X, the Empire and the *Primera crónica*', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 55 (1978): pp. 95–102.

<sup>79</sup> On the use of the Gothic myth and legacy to justify later power claims see Roger Collins, 'Sicut Lex Gothorum Continet: Law and Charters in Ninth- and Tenth-Century León and Catalonia', *English Historical Review*, 100 (1985): pp. 489–512; Julio Escalona, 'Family Memories: Inventing Alfonso I of Asturias', in Isabel Alfonso, Hugh Kennedy and Julio Escalona (eds), *Building Legitimacy: Political Discourses and Forms of Legitimation in Medieval Societies* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 2232–62. [Available online at: <http://digital.csic.es/handle/10261/44838> (last accessed 19 June 2014).]

<sup>80</sup> Fraker, *The Scope of History*, pp. 38–43.

<sup>81</sup> See Appendix 'Estudio sobre la *PCG*', pp. 851–92. It has to be remembered that Menéndez Pidal undertook the study of the *EE* to use it as a source for his literary research on the Iberian epic and its written preservation.

self-styled Prince of Valencia, Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar, named *El Cid*.<sup>82</sup> Why the need of inserting epic sources? In the words of Menéndez Pidal:

No iba, pues, la Crónica de España dirigida a un público restringido de latinistas, sino a los caballeros, a los burgueses, a los mismos que escuchaban a los juglares, por lo cual se hacía conveniente incluir, más por extenso que antes, la materia de aquellos cantares que el público estaba habituado a oír ...<sup>83</sup>

[Since the Spanish chronicle was not addressed to a restricted audience of Latinists anymore, but rather to the knights, to those living in the urban spaces, and to those who listened to minstrels; it became convenient to include the subject matters of those epic songs, which the audience was already used to listen to, more extensively than before ...]

One issue under debate is whether the Alfonsine enterprise was an historical recreation of fiction or rather a fictionalization of history. All the events and characters which appear in the historical narration belonged to a shared classical cultural background, but they were also enriched and imbued with typical medieval values.<sup>84</sup> Nonetheless, even though the Castilian legendary past was partially entrusted to epic, medieval chronicles were not completely neglected. The *Chronicon mundi* by Lucas de Tuy (d.1249), *De rebus Hispaniae*, the *Historia Arabum* and the *Historia Vandalorum, Alanorum et Silinguorum* by Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (d.1247), were considered by far the most reliable accounts of the Peninsular events up to that time.

The first two official versions of the *EE*, probably the most renowned of the Alfonsine historiographical works, were those named respectively *Versión primitiva* or *regia* (1270–74)<sup>85</sup> and *Versión Crítica* (1282–84), the latter undertaken in Seville. Both of them seemed to proceed from the same original archetype rather than one from the other. In all likelihood, the second version was Alfonso X's attempt to enlarge and update history by adding contemporary events. This process of 'structural refurbishment' shortened, and in some cases fully eliminated, some of the poetic passages presented in the *Versión primitiva*.

<sup>82</sup> Appendix of *PCG* by R. Menéndez Pidal; Fraker, *The Scope of History*, p. 42. For a more detailed analysis of *El Cid* in the *EE* see Chapter 5, pp. 148–60.

<sup>83</sup> R. Menéndez Pidal, *PCG*, p. 877.

<sup>84</sup> Fernando Gómez Redondo, 'La función del personaje en la *Estoria de España* alfonsí', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 14 (1984): pp. 187–210. See also Funes, *El modelo Alfonsí*, p. 75.

<sup>85</sup> This first version goes as far as the reign of the Leonese King Bermudo III (r. 1028–37).

Several other versions followed the first two mentioned above.<sup>86</sup> The *Versión Retóricamente Amplificada*, probably written at the time of Sancho IV, the *Crónica General* by Juan Manuel, the *Crónica de Veinte Reyes* (whose original title was 'de Once Reyes'), the *Crónica de Castilla*, the *Crónica General Vulgata* and the *Crónica General de 1344* are some of the re-elaborations of the entire work or copies of selected parts.<sup>87</sup> Such a *florilegium* of variants would explain the confusion among critics in identifying a unique and authentic first version. Such confusion did not prevent scholars, such as Ramón Menéndez Pidal, from speculating about the existence of an original archetype on which the post-Alfonsine compilers might have based their recreations. After a series of partial and unreliable versions, such as *Las quatro partes enteras de la Crónica de España* by Florián de Ocampo (1541),<sup>88</sup> the first critical edition of the *EE* was undertaken by Menéndez Pidal in 1906 and renamed as *Primera Crónica General*.<sup>89</sup> The latter, enriched by a critical study by Diego Catalán in 1977, is the version which I consulted for this study, taking into account also the revisions made by Inés Fernández Ordóñez in her critical version of the *EE*, undertaken after the discovery of the MS Ss in Salamanca in 1983.

### *The Alfonsine Legislative Production*

Since the fifth century, when the Visigoths settled in the Peninsula, the *Lex Gothica* had regulated private and public lives. In the seventh century its norms were translated into Latin and continued to be used during the 'Reconquest', as

<sup>86</sup> Fernández-Ordóñez, 'El taller historiográfico alfonsí', p. 124; Fernández-Ordóñez, 'La historiografía alfonsí y post-alfonsí', pp. 103–12.

<sup>87</sup> Inés Fernández-Ordóñez, 'Variación en el modelo historiográfico alfonsí en el siglo XIII. Las versiones de las *Estoria de España*', in Georges Martin (ed.), *La historia alfonsí: el modelo y sus destinos (siglos XIII–XV): seminario organizado por la Casa de Velázquez (30 de enero de 1995)* (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2000), pp. 41–74; Mariano de la Campa Gutiérrez, 'La versión primitiva de la *Estoria de España* de Alfonso X: edición crítica', in Florencio Sevilla Arroyo and Carlos Alvar Ezquerro (eds), *Actas del XIII Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas* (Madrid: Alianza, 1998), pp. 59–72.

<sup>88</sup> It was based on a non-authentic version, as demonstrated by the wide range of mistakes, which were likely due to recompilations and expansions of the originals. See Mariano de la Campa Gutiérrez, 'Crítica textual y crónicas generales de España: ejemplificación de un método', in Isaías Lerner, Robert Nival and Alejandro Alonso (eds), *Actas del XIV Congreso de la Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas, New York 162–1 Julio 2001* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2004), pp. 45–53. See also Juan Bautista Crespo Arce, 'La complejidad textual de la historiografía alfonsí', in Lerner, Nival and Alonso, *Actas*, pp. 55–66.

<sup>89</sup> On Part I, Part II and the beginning of Part III.

echoed in the local *fueros*.<sup>90</sup> Finally, they had been reorganized in the Castilian written *corpus*, entitled *Fuero Juzgo*, undertaken by Ferdinand III. Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis* had inspired the edition of the *Fuero Juzgo*, although the latter resembled more an anthology of moral rules rather than a collection of secular laws. Roman and canon laws proved extremely influential and by the thirteenth century they had become part of the Iberian academic portfolio, taught by masters of jurisprudence, who had been educated at the most famous European universities and now occupied privileged roles in the Iberian courts.<sup>91</sup> Following his father's footsteps, Alfonso X promoted the juridical unification of his dominions by editing a series of legal *compendia* aimed at securing his legislative monopoly. As Aquilino Iglesia suggested, wholly or partially, Alfonso X fulfilled his projects by the accomplishment of the *Fuero Real*, the *Espéculo* and the *Siete Partidas*.<sup>92</sup>

The *Fuero Real* is regarded as Alfonso X's first attempt to impose his *summa potestas*,<sup>93</sup> to regulate his relationships with the cities and the nobles, and to reorganize revenues by keeping the colonial tributes for the crown, while depriving the nobles of their traditional sources of income. The code was given to the cities of Castile and Extremadura in order to supplant the pre-existing

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<sup>90</sup> According to Van Kleffens, during the 'Reconquest', there was not a unique law, but rather 'the laws' applied to the different geographic areas: Castile, Aragon, Cataluña, Navarre, Balearic Islands, Basque Country and Valencia. Later, the authority of the *Fuero Juzgo* was reduced by the local laws such as the *fueros municipales* (issued by the king in order to administrate those townships liberated by the Moors' oppression), *fueros* containing concessions to specific social groups (noble particularly) and *fueros generales*. Eelco Nicolaas Van Kleffens, *Hispanic Law until the End of Middle Ages* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1968).

<sup>91</sup> Masters of law, after the Gregorian reform, tried to reorganize and homogenize the previous ecclesiastical laws. The climax of this process was the publication of the *Decretum* (Concordance of Discordant Canons) by Gratian in 1140. Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, 'Historia del Derecho', in José Juan Ferreiro Lapatz (ed.), *Derecho financiero en AA.VV.: La enseñanza del derecho en España* (Madrid: Tecnos, 1987), pp. 122–34; A. Iglesia Ferreirós, 'La labor legislativa de Alfonso X el Sabio', in Antonio Pérez Martín (ed.), *España y Europa. Un pasado jurídico común* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1986), pp. 275–599; Gonzalo Martínez Díez, 'Los comienzos de la recepción del derecho romano en España y el Fuero Real', in *Diritto comune e diritti locali nella storia dell'Europa, atti del Convegno di Varenna (121–5 giugno 1979)*, ed. Istituto Lombardo (Accademia di Scienza e Lettere) and Regione Lombardia (Milan: Giuffrè 1980), pp. 253–62.

<sup>92</sup> José Manuel Pérez-Prendes, 'Las Leyes de Alfonso el Sabio', *Revista de Occidente*, 37 (1984): pp. 67–84.

<sup>93</sup> According to Isidore of Seville's theory the king had been endowed with supreme power by God to guide his people towards the right and the good.

municipal *fueros* and it remained in force until 1348 when, during the reign of Alfonso XI, the *Siete Partidas* were officially issued.<sup>94</sup> A distinction needs to be made between the *Fuero Real* and another Alfonsine legal code: the *Espéculo*. Both were conceived in Palencia in 1255.<sup>95</sup> However, the *Espéculo* was intended to apply to the royal court and it represented a source of reference to which municipal tribunals – which adopted the *Fuero Real* instead – could appeal for further clarification. The *Espéculo*, known with this name only from the fourteenth century, formerly named *Libro de las leyes* or *Libro del Fuero*, failed in Alfonso X's purpose to be used as a universal legislative manual – or at least as a valid substitute of particular *fueros* – as it threatened the privileges, autonomy and economic profits of the cities and the nobles.<sup>96</sup> The most salient points re-established by the *Espéculo* were the appropriation of the city tax by the Royal Chamber; the uncontested authority of the king in the election of judges and *alcaldes*; and his incontestable power in nominating a deputy to manage some juridical affairs on his behalf.<sup>97</sup> After the nobles rebelled against the King in 1272, both the *Fuero Real* and the *Espéculo* were relegated to the management of the Court trials exclusively.

Origins, sources and policies behind the Alfonsine legal production have been discussed by numerous scholars, among whom Iglesia Ferreirós, Craddock and García Gallo.<sup>98</sup> The latter, for example, suggested that the three main

<sup>94</sup> This title was acquired only in the fourteenth century when Alfonso XI baptized it with such a name before issuing it in the *Ordenamiento de Alcalá* (1348). Jerry R. Craddock, *Palabra de rey: selección de estudios sobre legislación alfonsina: volumen ofrecido en homenaje por su colegas y amigos*, ed. and trans. Heather Bamford and Isreal Sanz Sánchez, Semyr, Homenaje, 6 (Salamanca: Seminario de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas; Sociedad de Estudios Medievales y Renacentistas, 2008); Jerry R. Craddock, 'La cronología de las obras legislativas de Alfonso X el Sabio', *AHDE*, 51 (1981): pp. 365–418.

<sup>95</sup> O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X*, pp. 3–12. This is the theory supported also by José Sánchez-Arcilla Bernal, 'La obra legislativa de Alfonso X el Sabio. Historia de una polémica', in Montoya Martínez and Domínguez Rodríguez, *El Scriptorium alfonsí*, pp. 62–80. The *Fuero Real*, issued in 1255, at the beginning of the king's mandate, was given to Castile and then to Extremaduras in order to impose the legislative monopoly claimed by the sovereign.

<sup>96</sup> Alfonso García Gallo, *Manual de Historia del Derecho Español* (Madrid: Impr. A.G.E.S.A., 1959), pp. 731–43.

<sup>97</sup> Alfonso X, *El Espéculo*, ed. Gonzalo Martínez Díez (Ávila: Fundación Sánchez Albornoz, 1985).

<sup>98</sup> Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, 'El *Setenario*: última e inconclusa refundición alfonsina de la primera *Partida*', *AHDE*, 56 (1986): pp. 441–46; Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, 'Cuestiones alfonsinas', *AHDE*, 55 (1985): pp. 95–149; Alfonso García-Gallo, 'La obra Legislativa de Alfonso X. Hechos e hipótesis', *AHDE*, 54 (1984): pp. 97–161; Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, 'Alfonso X, su labor legislativa y los historiadores', *Historia Instituciones Documentos*,



codes (*Fuero Real*, *Espéculo* and *Siete Partidas*) developed one from another in a process which began under Alfonso X and continued after his death.<sup>99</sup> Incontestably, all these studies have helped to deepen modern understanding of the medieval Iberian juridical system; however, many of their conclusions appear to be antithetical.<sup>100</sup> The *Espéculo*, for example, is currently a source of unsolved problems posed by its interruption at the fifth book and its problematic dating.<sup>101</sup> Political contingencies might explain the similarity of dating of these three law codes. The *Siete Partidas* were begun in 1256 as a *compendium* of philosophical norms designed to fit the new universal and imperialistic policy

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9 (1982): pp. 9–112; Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, '*Fuero Real y Espéculo*', *AHDE*, 52 (1982): pp. 111–91; Iglesia Ferreirós, 'La labor legislativa de Alfonso X el Sabio', pp. 275–599; Craddock, 'La cronología', pp. 365–418; Aquilino Iglesia Ferreirós, 'Alfonso X el Sabio y su obra legislativa: algunas reflexiones', *AHDE*, 50 (1980): pp. 445–65; Alfonso García-Gallo, 'Nuevas observaciones sobre la obra legislativa de Alfonso X', *AHDE*, 46 (1976): pp. 609–70; Alfonso García-Gallo, '*El Libro de las leyes* de Alfonso al Sabio. Del *Espéculo* a las *Partidas*', *AHDE*, 212–2 (1951–52): pp. 345–528. For an overview of the earlier studies on the same subject see also Sánchez-Arcilla Bernal, 'Historia de una polémica', pp. 17–81.

<sup>99</sup> In García Gallos's assumption the *Libro del Fuero* or *Espéculo*, probably finished in 1260, was the first issued code not aimed at replacing the municipal *fueros*, but rather at unifying the legislative system. The following step was represented by the second redaction of the code, concluded in 1265 and characterized by the introduction of some regulations inspired by canon law. A new title – *Libro del Fuero de las Leyes* – was created and the work seemed to be limited to develop a didactic discourse without any direct juridical effects. The third phase was a philosophical revision of the work which adopted a new sevenfold structure, an updated title – *Libros de las leyes* or *Partidas* – which was probably completed by the jurists operating at Ferdinand IV's court, Alfonso X's heir. The fourth stage occurred in 1325 when new laws were incorporated into a new code by the royal jurists. Finally, the fifth and last revision was probably finished around 1340 and its main innovation laid on the prologue which attests the dating between 1256 and 1263. This theory was twisted in García Gallos's subsequent analysis of 1976 in which he stated that the *Espéculo* was the imposed law against which the noble reaction exploded.

<sup>100</sup> The fact that the originals are unknown and the versions on which scholars have been working are copies from the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries complicate the situation even further. The first critical and philologically revised editions of these legal codes appeared much later: the *Espéculo* in 1985 and the *Fuero Real* in 1988, both edited by Gonzalo Martínez Díez.

<sup>101</sup> The code consists of five books, but there are textual references alluding to other two volumes – namely books six and seven – which should have been included in the original plan of the work, before it was suspended and later modified after the development of the aforementioned events. Iglesia attributed this to the sudden changes in Alfonso X's politics after the Pisan delegates' proposal to become emperor in 1256. According to Iglesia Ferreirós the production of the *Espéculo* was interrupted in 1254 because of the difficulties faced by Alfonso X when trying to impose the law of León (*Fuero Juzgo*) on Castile.



desired by the sovereign. However, such yearning for supreme power had always been part of royal aspirations; in fact, both the *Fuero Real* and the *Espéculo*, issued before the Pisan embassy in 1256, established that the king, as well as the emperor, were the only two figures allowed to make laws. Such an experimental juridical system weakened from 1272 and collapsed completely in 1274 when, during the *Cortes de Zamora*, the King was forced to withdraw the new laws, allowing the *alcaldes* to judge the trials using the ancient local *fueros*. By then, the undisputed *potestas contendendi leges* and the absolute legal supremacy which Alfonso X claimed were definitively lost.<sup>102</sup>

### The *Siete Partidas*

The *Setenario*, initiated by Ferdinand III, was a legal treatise destined to change the juridical status quo of Iberia. Ferdinand III conceived it as a guide for the moral and civic education of princes and kings. Left incomplete, this work was continued by Alfonso X, who stretched his father's original project into the sevenfold collection of the *Siete Partidas* (henceforth *SP*). The latter embodied a sort of 'socio-political encyclopaedia of pre-modern Iberia', since it gathered together all the legislative patrimony and the acquired knowledge up to the thirteenth century.<sup>103</sup> The moral and pragmatic rules contained in this vernacular code were addressed to everybody including the sovereign, who, albeit creator and interpreter of the law, was not exempted from observing it.<sup>104</sup> According to Keller, it was such a didactic framework which made Alfonso X choose not to promulgate the code, but to use it as a manual of legal training. Despite the fact that a number of textual references seem to suggest that Alfonso X wanted the *SP* to be issued, at least at court, it is highly debatable whether the King considered the code to be more than a merely academic manual.<sup>105</sup>

Imbued with textual references of different types, from classical philosophy, Roman legislation, ecclesiastical and lay literary and narrative sources, the *SP* still appears as an exhaustive *unicum*. Its seven books divided into 182 titles and subdivided in 2,696 laws regulated all aspects of thirteenth-century life. Each

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<sup>102</sup> The *potestas contendendi leges* was the power to create, interpret and publish laws, which only in a second stage were discussed in the *Cortes*, before their official distribution to the cities.

<sup>103</sup> David Rojinsky, 'The Rule of Law and the Written Word in Alfonsine Castile: Demystifying a Consecrated Vernacular', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 80 (2003): pp. 287–305.

<sup>104</sup> *SP* II:I:V.

<sup>105</sup> O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X, the Cortes*, pp. 3–12.

title presents a summary of the topic while each law describes its legal proposition in more depth. The symbolic sevenfold partition calls to mind elements related to both the religious and secular life of medieval people: from the liberal arts, the Sacraments, the ages of man, the joys and sorrows of the Virgin, to the Holy Gift of the Spirit. Curiously, the name of its royal commissioner – Alfonso – is also made of seven letters, each of them appearing as the first letter of the opening word at the beginning of each book.

Francisco Martínez Marina and Antonio Solalinde attributed the authorship of the *SP* to a company of royal jurists who, coming from the most prestigious European universities, offered their knowledge in return for a series of material and social privileges.<sup>106</sup> It is widely accepted that the Bolognese Jacobo de las Leyes, Maestre Roldán, Fernando Martínez de Zamora and Juan Alfonso were some of the most eminent collaborators, although none of them is named in the *SP*.<sup>107</sup> While its drafting began on 26 June 1256 (after the Pisan embassy in March 1256), the date of its conclusion is still vague and scholars' suggestions span from 1261 to 1265. The most reliable date of conclusion, however, seems to be 28 August 1265, as attested in the first prologue of the code.

For centuries the *SP* lacked a proper critical edition, probably because the existing codes were regarded as manipulations created by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century compilers.<sup>108</sup> The inadequacy of the surviving sources and the lack of originals represented a problem even for Alfonso XI (r.1313–50), who tried to collect all the circulating variants in order to produce a version deprived of interpolations, finally issued in 1348. This theory of a late official diffusion of the code has been widely accepted and it overrode the previous idea according to which the *SP* were published by Alfonso X, but their distribution was forbidden under the reign of Sancho IV, since the rightful application of its norms would have put the same Sancho – who dethroned his father – in a difficult position.

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<sup>106</sup> Solalinde, 'Intervención de Alfonso X', pp. 283–88; Francisco Martínez Marina, *Ensayo histórico-crítico sobre la legislación y principales cuerpos legales de los reinos de León y Castilla especialmente sobre el código de las Siete Partidas de D. Alfonso el Sabio*, 2nd edn (Madrid: [n. pub.], 1834; Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes; Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional, 2005).

<sup>107</sup> In the eighteenth century the Jesuit Andrés Marcos Burriel advanced the hypothesis that Alfonso X was the unique composer of the legal code, but this theory was rejected very soon.

<sup>108</sup> García y García carried out a study of all the codes containing parts of the *SP* or their translations; he also recovered about 115 manuscripts in Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese and Galician preserved in libraries all around the world.

The edition adopted for this study is the one licensed under the supervision of the Real Academia de la Historia in 1807, declared to be the official version by the Real Orden in 1818.<sup>109</sup>

### A Legal and Moral Treatise: Friendship in Book IV of the *Siete Partidas*

Amistad es cosa que ayunta los corazones de los homes para amarse mucho; ca segunt dixieron los sabios antiguo, et es verdad, amor pasa todos los debdos.<sup>110</sup>

[Friendship is something which induces people to love one another greatly, for, as wise men in the past declared, true love is the most important of all obligations.]

The presence of an entire title on friendship in the law code (*SP*, Book IV, title XXVII) is extremely intriguing. Considering the book's structure, the place of this title is highly significant since it follows a section on mutual bonds between vassals and lords established by reason of natural connections, grants, services and gratitude. Equally revealing is that this title is symbolically fragmented into seven parts, all leading to general warnings about how to behave as, and how to choose, a good friend. Despite the centrality of friendship in Book IV, in the opening summary of Book I, in which the contents of the entire work are listed, the theme of *amistad* (friendship) deserves scarce, if any, attention. Whether title XXVII of Book IV was added later, or the theme was deliberately ignored because of its prominent philosophical character, is a debatable issue.

The contents of title XXVII will be summarized in the following sections and they will pave the way to discover parallels, similarities and contradictions existing between the legal norms, the historical events which recalled those rules and their literary adaptation.

<sup>109</sup> The first edition was by Alonso Díaz de Montalvo, published in Seville in 1491 and reprinted until 1528; a second edition by Gregorio López (Salamanca, 1555) was reprinted fifteen times, until 1855. It received the official sanction from the *real cédula* and it was taken as principal source of reference for the legislative production undertaken in Latin America and Philippines. Read further in the introduction to *The Siete Partidas*, ed. Robert I. Burns, trans. Samuel Parsons Scott (5 vols, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000). The third edition of the *SP*, licensed with the supervision of the Real Academia de la Historia in 1807, has been adopted as the main reference for this study. Additionally, the *Primera Partida*, which probably came out from the Alfonsine scriptorium in 1290, now preserved in the British Library (BL Add.20787) was edited by Juan Antonio Arias Bonet.

<sup>110</sup> This is the opening sentence of the prologue of *SP* IV:XXVII.

Law I 'Qué cosa es amistad' (What Is Friendship)

In this first law the focus is on '... los otros debdos que han los homes entre sí solamente por amistad'.<sup>111</sup> After recovering the Latin origins of the term *amicitia* and the definitions provided by the most eminent classical authorities, among whom Aristotle, the law states that whereas love can be univocal, *amicitia* must be based on mutual benevolence and respect.<sup>112</sup> This first law also presents a complete glossary of lexical definitions, aimed at avoiding any misunderstandings. *Bienquerencia*, for example, was defined as the benevolence that a person felt for another individual, whose excellent qualities and fame were well-known, regardless of whether or not they had ever met. This suggests a parallel with the idea of 'friendship in absence' according to which the bond of intimacy and affection might exist before and beyond any physical contact.<sup>113</sup> An example of this is epistolary communication, which usually linked individuals far distant in space, whose acquaintance was delegated to the power of their rhetorical exchanges.<sup>114</sup> *Concordia* (concord) was also defined as the stage preceding the flourishing of any true friendship, although such consequentiality was not guaranteed.<sup>115</sup> Finally, as Aristotle had already theorized, a society ruled by *concordia* would easily survive without any externally imposed regulation: '... porque la amistad les farie complir et guardar aquello mesmo que quiere et manda la justicia.'<sup>116</sup>

Law II 'A qué tiene pro la amistad' (In What Ways Friendship Is Beneficial):  
Wealth and Age Restrictions

This law begins with another quotation from Aristotle:

Provecho grande et bien viene á los homes de la amistad, de guisa que segunt dixo Aristotiles ningunt home que haya bontad en si non quiere vevir en este mundo sin amigos, maguer fuese abandonado de todos los otros bienes que en él son ...<sup>117</sup>

<sup>111</sup> The mutual obligation existing between men, by reason of friendship. *SP IV:XXVII*.

<sup>112</sup> *SP IV:XXVII*.

<sup>113</sup> Eoin G. Cassidy, 'He Who Has Friends Can Have No Friend: Classical and Christian Perspectives on the Limits to Friendship', in J. Haseldine (ed.), *Friendship in Medieval Europe* (Sutton: Stroud, 1999), pp. 45–67.

<sup>114</sup> See Chapter 1, p. 26.

<sup>115</sup> *SP IV:XXVII:I*.

<sup>116</sup> ... Because friendship would cause them to do and observe what justice orders and directs. *SP IV:XXVII:I*. Reference to Aristotle, *Politics*, III:IX.

<sup>117</sup> *SP IV:XXVII:II*.

[Great advantage and benefit result to man through friendship, so that, as Aristotle said, no man who has any kindness in his nature desires to live in his world without friendship even though he may be supplied with all the property there is in it ...]

*Amicitia* was fundamental for everybody, regardless of their social and economic positions. Wealth became an inexhaustible source of welfare only when it was shared with friends, preserved and increased by their help. While friendship was fundamental to enjoy one's own wealth, it was even worthier when the individuals involved were neither rich nor powerful. In fact, friends were the major supporters and sources of encouragement for those who experienced precarious situations. Moreover, concord regulated friendships of different kinds, including those between children and their adult tutors;<sup>118</sup> bonds among youths; those between the elderly; as well as friendships aimed at providing assistance and aid to those who found themselves already in the twilight of life, unable to satisfy their own needs.

*Law III 'Cómo se debe home aprovechar del consejo del amigo, et qual debe seer escogido para esto' (How A Man Should Profit by the Advice of His Friends, and What Kind of A Person Should Be Selected for This Purpose): Proving Friendship*

The most notable feature to emerge from the analysis of this third law is the correlation between friends and counsellors. Individuals endowed with loyalty, wisdom and any other virtues characterizing *los buenos omnes* (the good/wise men) were excellent candidates to occupy a central role in another person's public and private life. *Consejeros* (advisors), in particular, held privileged positions at court and were rewarded for their wise advice. The Alfonsine law, recalling Cicero's definition, emphasizes that '... ninguna cosa es tan noble como haber home amigo á quien podiere decir seguramente su voluntad como á sí mesmo',<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup> This kind of relationship recalls the dialogue between the old grandfather and his *amigo pequeño* (young friend), that is to say the child Zifar, in the eponymous poem. The old man addresses the child with the appellative of *amigo* during a private conversation in which he was revealing to him a secret about life and social statuses. In the patriarch's declaration an anachronistic subverting rule is given, according to which the power of virtue could be, in some cases, more powerful than the predestination given by lineage. *Libro del Cavallero Zifar*, ed. Joaquín González Muela (Madrid: Castalia, 1982), pp. 76–79.

<sup>119</sup> ... Nothing was so pleasant as to have, for a friend, a man to whom one could speak his mind as to himself. *SP IV:XXVII:III*.

even though it was indispensable to test the candidates before trusting them completely.

The *topos* of the proof of friendship had been a recurrent theme in the Castilian literary production since the twelfth century, of which one of the most famous and re-adapted examples was the story, of oriental origin, about the *medio amigo* (half of a friend).<sup>120</sup> The tale, which in all likelihood appeared for the first time in the *Disciplina clericalis* by Petrus Alphonsus, recurred also in other works, probably derived from the same oriental archetype.<sup>121</sup> The plot is the following: a father, on the point of dying, asked his son how many friends he had got. The son believed he had got hundreds, but his father – who had personally managed to find only ‘half’ in his entire life – warned him not to trust individuals as friends before testing them. In order to prove his point, the father suggested that his young son should visit all his declared friends, pretending that he had murdered a man, and ask for their help. The young man followed his father’s instructions, but, as his parent had foreseen, none of his friends helped him, except for his father’s ‘half of a friend’.

Petrus Alphonsus’s influence also appears in other Alfonsine works, such as the *Estoria de España*, and more precisely in the story about the Roman Emperor, Nero (d.68 AD), calling for his friends’ aid:

A la media noche desperto, et enuio mandaderos por todas las casas de sus amigos, que los despertassen et les dixiessen que les rogaua que uiniessen fasta el.

<sup>120</sup> Kenneth R. Scholberg, ‘A Half-Friend and a Friend and a Half’, *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 35 (1958): pp. 187–98. See also: M.J. Lacarra, “‘El medio amigo’ (AT 893): la singularidad de las versiones hispánicas medievales a la luz de la tradición oral’, in J.M. Cacho Blecua and M.J. Lacarra (eds), *Tipología de las formas breves románicas* (III) (Zaragoza: Universidad de Zaragoza; Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2003), pp. 267–92; Gaetano Lalomia, ‘I complessi percorsi del racconto del *medio amigo* nella Castiglia medievale’, in F. Cigni and M.P. Bett (eds), *Testi, generi e tradizioni nella Romania medievale. Atti del VI Convegno Nazionale della società italiana di filologia romanza, Pisa il 28–30 settembre 2000* (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 2002), pp. 79–96. The story also appears in the *Disciplina Clericalis*, *El Libro del Caballero Zifar*, *El Conde Lucanor* and some references appear also in the CSM.

<sup>121</sup> Petrus Alphonsus, *Disciplina Clericalis*, ed. and trans. M.J. Lacarra (Zaragoza: Guara, 1980). It also appears in *Barlaam et Josafat*, *Calila et Dimna* (in particular, see the tale ‘De la paloma collorada et del mur et del galápago et del gamo et del cuervo’, *Calila e Dimna*, pp. 202–23), *Libro de los Buenos Proverbios* (in which the value of the proof of friendship is highlighted through the statements attributed to the most eminent ancient philosophers, such as Plato (p. 91) and Diogenes (p. 140)). Echoes of this appear also original Castilian works such as *Castigos y documentos de Sancho IV*, *El Libro del Cavallero Zifar* and *El Conde Lucanor*.

Et ni uinieron los amigos, ni tornaron los mandaderos. E quando el uio aquesto, leuantosse, et tomosse con muy pocos, et fue a todas las casas de sus amigos; et nol quiso abrir ninguno; et con grand cueyta tornosse pora su casa, et no fallo alli ninguno de todas sus guardas, ca fuxieran todos; ca assi cuemo el no se fiaua en ninguno, otrossi ninguno se fiaua en el ... Entonce dixo: 'ni e yo amigo, ni enemigo'.<sup>122</sup>

[He woke up at midnight, and sent messengers to all his friends' houses, to wake them up telling them that he needed them. But neither did his friends go, nor did his messengers return. And when he realized this, he got up and with a few men he went to his friends' houses; but nobody opened their doors to him. So, with great disappointment, he went back to his place, but he did not find any of his guards there, since all of them had left; because, as he did not trust anybody, in the same way, nobody trusted him ... Therefore he said: 'I have neither friends, nor enemies']

Sidestepping the historical and political considerations suggested by this episode, it is worth noticing that not even the Emperor's heightened status could guarantee the trustworthiness of his relationships, especially if friends had not been previously tested.

Any true friend should demonstrate loyalty, honesty and generosity, and in order to verify the existence of those qualities the most valuable proof was time. In fact, it was only by a long-term acquaintance that a man could really be sure of another's goodwill. Moreover, any broken links would indirectly testify the presence of falseness and hypocrisy. For this reason the law presents a moral admonition:

... que ha meester que ante que home tome amistad con otro, que puñe primeramente en conoscerlo si es bueno ... et la amistad non puede durar sinon entre aquellos que han bontad en sí ...<sup>123</sup>

[... it is necessary before one man establishes friendship with another to endeavour to become acquainted with him and ascertain if he is good first ... Friendship cannot last except between those who, of themselves, are kind ...]

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<sup>122</sup> *EE* 178.

<sup>123</sup> *SP* IV:XXVII:III.



Everyone should select trustworthy people while avoiding those who should not be trusted as companions, counsellors and, even less, as friends.

*Law IV 'Quantás maneras son de amistad' (How Many Kinds of Friendship There Are): The Revival of, and Additions to, Aristotle's Definitions of Friendship*

Aristotle's threefold classification – friendship by nature, interest and pleasure – is summarily recalled also in this fourth law. Natural friendships, including parental and marital connections, were compared with bonds existing in the animal world '... porque cada uno dellos ha naturalmente amistad con su compañero et con los fijos que nascent dellos ...'<sup>124</sup> The epithet of *compañero* was used to address individuals who acted according to the rules of loyalty and benevolence, but it also referred to all those who claimed to be linked by kinship or to belong to a family group, which usually included servants and close friends. Beyond this sense of solidarity, the feeling of belonging to the same country also contributed to the formation of bonds classified as natural friendships.

The process of adaptation of the aforementioned Aristotelian categories to a contemporary thirteenth-century reality engendered a second typology, defined as *amistad pura* (pure friendship), which was considered by far an unrivalled link essentially rooted in goodwill and deprived of any pressure generated by natural or biological duties. A third category was *amistad de interés* (interested friendship), based on contingent situations and therefore destined to fail. Such interested connections had already, and recurrently, appeared in the Iberian literary patrimony of pre-Alfonsine and oriental origins. An instance of this is the maxim from the *Flores de Filosofía*: 'qujen te ama por rrazon de alguna perderas su amor quando lo oujeres acabado'.<sup>125</sup>

In the final part of this fourth law, an additional typology of *amicitia* is added to the Aristotelian categories: the pact of mutual respect and honour that the *fijosdalgos* (nobly born individuals) agreed among them in order to preserve their rights and privileges, and to face together upheavals and disputes wherever they arose. These kinds of bonds were not new, since the previous customary law had already stated that a temporary truce of nine days had to be respected by any contenders after a duel and before entering a new agreement with the other party. Both the *Fuero Viejo de Castilla* and the *Fuero Real*, for example,

<sup>124</sup> ... Because each one of them has naturally friendship for his companion, and for the offspring born to the latter ... *SP IV:XXVII:IV*.

<sup>125</sup> The love of those who care for you out of interest will be lost once they achieve what they wanted. *Flores de Filosofía*, Chapter XXXIX.

issued norms regulating how to make war and peace (*hacer guerra y paz*).<sup>126</sup> The establishment of formal agreements appear again in *SP VII*, Title II, where the notion of a *confradía de caballeros* – a sort of guild of knights and nobles united in the name of a common military identity – appears. More precisely, Book VII, Title XI, which legislates on crimes and punishments, provides regulations concerning disputes and truces, while Title XII focuses on the establishment and maintenance of peaceful agreements. In the same *SP VII* it is also stated that whenever nobles were summoned before the king, but they were unable to go and defend themselves, then a member of their family, a close relative or one of their friends could act on their behalf.

Besides illustrating the qualities required to virtuous and trustworthy candidates, *SP IV:XXVII:IV* also deals with those who provided aid in dangerous or injurious situations, who appointed someone as a knight or celebrated their marriage and, last but not least, those who rescued another from captivity and death. Legally, all of them deserved the appellation of friends.

*Law V 'Cómo debe seer guardada la amistad entre los amigos' (How Friendship Should Be Preserved Among Friends): Loyalty, Good Faith and Equality*

The fifth law of this title reminds the readers that in order to preserve friendship and to make it endure, the parties involved should establish and observe three fundamental rules. First of all, mutual loyalty and good faith:

... el firmamiento et el cimiento de la amistad es la buena fe que home ha á su amigo; ca ningunt amor non puede seer firme en que fe non ha, porque loca cosa serie et sin razon de demander lealtad el un amigo al otro, si él non la hobiese en sí ...<sup>127</sup>

[... the good faith which a man keeps with his friends is the support and foundation of friendship, and no love can be firm in which faith does not exist, for it would be outrageous and unreasonable for one friend to ask loyalty of another when he has none himself ...]

<sup>126</sup> *Fuero Viejo*, ed. Ignacio Gordán de Aso y del Río and Miguel de Manuel y Rodríguez (Madrid: Joaquín Ibarra, 1771), I.I.I; Hilda Grassotti, 'El deber y el derecho de hacer guerra y paz en León y Castilla', in *Estudios medievales españoles* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1981), pp. 43–132.

<sup>127</sup> *SP IV:XXVII:V*.

The second warning is about the infamous comments which could injure a friend since ‘... qui deshonra á su amigo de palabra, desata la amistad que habie con él.’<sup>128</sup> The law also specifies that *buena palabra* is the ability to keep secrets between friends, the discovery of which would discredit and corrupt their friendship.

Finally, echoing St Augustine’s ideas, the third point of this law remarks upon the equality of friendship ‘... en la amistad non ha un grado mas alto que otro, ca siempre debe seer egual entre los amigos ...’<sup>129</sup> According to this Christian interpretation, *amicitia* was an instrument to make the unequal equal by means of the purest love for Christ. However, as pre-Christian philosophical thoughts had already shown, the implications of different kinds of friendship were far more complex and diverse.

*Law VI ‘Cómo el home debe amar á su amigo’ (How a Man Should Love His Friends): Philosophic Debates and Exemplary Behaviour*

According to the *SP*, while Cicero stated that friendship was a kind of trade made up of mutual and equivalent exchanges, other thinkers argued that man should ‘... amar á su amigo quanto él se ama ...’<sup>130</sup> During the entire Middle Ages, similar philosophical speculations were still at the core of an open debate.<sup>131</sup> The Alfonsine law commented on the excellence and rarity of pure noble commitments:

Et porque en este tiempo se fallan pocos los que asi quieran amar, por ende son pocos los amigos que hayan en sí complida amistad.<sup>132</sup>

[And because, at this time, few are found who desire to be mutually attached in this way, there are not many persons between whom perfect friendship exists.]

Except for criminal and unfair actions, which could never be justified, one should be ready to give everything for a friend’s sake:

<sup>128</sup> ... Whoever dishonours his friend in speech destroys the friendship which he has for him. *SP IV:XXVII:V*.

<sup>129</sup> ... In friendship there is no rank higher than another, for equality should always exist between friends ... *SP IV:XXVII:V*.

<sup>130</sup> ... Love his friend as much as himself ... *SP IV:XXVII:VI*.

<sup>131</sup> Stone, *Marriage and Friendship*, pp. 115–30.

<sup>132</sup> *SP IV:XXVII:VI*.

Pero con todo eso bien debe home poner su persona ó su haber á peligro de muerte ó de perdimiento por amparanza de su amigo et de lo suyo quando meester le fuere.<sup>133</sup>

[Still a man should expose his person and property to the risk of death or loss in order to protect a friend and his property, whenever it may become necessary.]

A number of examples from ancient history were recalled in the Alfonsine law as noteworthy prototypes of friendship, probably in order to demystify the pessimistic vision regarding thirteenth-century attitudes. Such was the case of Orestes and Pylades. They behaved as real friends, ready to offer their own lives to rescue a friend from death. During the trial, in which Orestes was accused and condemned to severe punishment, Pylades tried to save him by pretending to be Orestes. The latter did not accept his friend's sacrifice and revealed that he himself was the one who deserved punishment. The didactic message of the story is addressed to both the readers and the sovereign. Like the fictional king of the story, the sovereign-reader of this message should learn from the loyalty of the two friends and make an effort to behave exemplarily and to become himself a good friend of his subjects.

*Law VII 'Por quáles rezones se desata el amistad' (For What Reasons Friendship is Destroyed): The End of Friendship*

It is not far off the mark to assert that friendship was presented in a sort of process of anthropomorphosis, being subjected to birth, growth and death. Particularly, the theme of broken and destroyed friendship appears in other sections of the *SP*, such as Book VI, which deals with problems of inheritance and how these could lead to the failure of amicable bonds.

None of those phases was unfamiliar to the medieval reader. The end of friendship was generally ascribed to the interference of a third *falso y mesturero* (false and deceitful individual); the betrayal of one of the parties; a friend's death; the dissolution of any original common interests and the sudden changes of one of the companion's economic situation. Some of those agents re-appear in this legal title, but here the focus is drawn to the causes undermining natural friendship which, as the law categorically stated, should not be dissolved on account of illness, poverty or misfortune. While friendship generated by interests might be broken once a common aim was achieved, natural friendship

<sup>133</sup> *SP* IV:XXVII:VI.

could disintegrate only in the presence of unforgivable mistakes, such as betrayal against the country or the king:

... et la otra que han por naturaleza los que son de una tierra, desatase quando alguno dellos es manifestamente enemigo della ó del señor que la ha de gobernar et de mantener en justicia; ca pues que él por su yerro es enemigo de la tierra, non ha por que seer ninguno su amigo por razon de la naturaleza que habie con él.<sup>134</sup>

[... the second kind of friendship which exists by nature between natives of the same country, is destroyed when any of them becomes the open enemy of his country, or of the lord whose duty it is to govern it and maintain justice within its limits; for since he is the enemy of the country, no one has any reason to be his friend because of the natural relationship in common with him.]

The dissolution of such a bond was considered as lamentable as any offence against the law of nature since, as *SP IV:XXIV:II* states, the relationships between subjects and lords were as natural as the bonds between parents and progeny. For this reason, the definitions of civic and natural friendships were enhanced to include also the bonds between citizens whose acts of disloyalty towards their lord were perceived as acts of betrayal against their own fellow citizens. Such a statement recalls Aristotle's political theory according to which friendship was the bond between wise citizens, who behaved righteously for their city's sake, guided by their mutual love and respect.<sup>135</sup>

To conclude, while presenting guidelines of righteous and exemplary behaviour, the *SP* might have been thought as an instrument to solve, or at least to marginalize, illegal actions which had already happened or were likely to occur. The legislative production had been for ages the doctrinal area within which lawyers had discussed and re-shaped the classical *lex amicitia*. Nonetheless, the same legislators were not allowed to experience friendly relationships among them because it was believed that any personal connections would undermine their professional objectivity.<sup>136</sup> What is undeniable is that friendship, as it is presented in Book IV, seems to deal with a moral and doctrinal subject rather than to provide a list of pragmatic norms aimed at regulating social exchanges. Bonds of friendship were regarded as aspirations towards human perfection, which in some cases proved even more solid and beneficial than links based on

<sup>134</sup> *SP IV:XXVII:VII*.

<sup>135</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, III:IX.

<sup>136</sup> Peter Goodrich, 'Laws of Friendship', *Law and Literature*, 15 (2003): pp. 23–52.

consanguinity and marital bonds.<sup>137</sup> *SP IV*, and particularly title XXVII, must be taken as starting points to assess ideas and representations of friendship critically and comparatively, since they were partly moralized and filtered through the religious and philosophical currents which influenced both the Learned King and those working in his chancery.

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<sup>137</sup> Rameline Marsan, *Itinéraire espagnol du conte médiéval* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1974), pp. 468–504.

## Chapter 3

# Spiritual and Religious Friendships

### A Link between the Secular and the Spiritual Worlds

The Latin definition *spiritualis amicitia* (spiritual friendship), which appeared for the first time in the Venerable Bede (c.672–735), recurred throughout the entire medieval period, referring to bonds developed within a non-physical human sphere concerned with profound thoughts, moods and feelings, as well as to any connections between individuals and God.<sup>1</sup> In some cases the adjective ‘spiritual’ also alluded to religious friendships, such as companionship involving church members, affinities among people sharing faith and similar beliefs, contacts with supernatural and divine entities and, last but not least, pure and uncorrupted bonds devoid of any sexual or carnal implications.<sup>2</sup>

Biblical references to spiritual connections were recalled in order to legitimize the ancient and pagan ideas of friendship, to make them acceptable to the majority and approved by the Church. The Scholastic doctrines and Thomas Aquinas’s revisions of the Aristotelian definitions of *amicitia* influenced the interpretation of pre-existing social networks. Among the numerous cases concerning medieval Western Europe, examples such as Aelred of Rievaulx’s dialogue-structured treatise *De Spirituali Amicitia* (c.1160) and Dante Alighieri’s literary production and personal experiences are emblematic of the importance that friendship assumed within different social and political circles at different stages of life.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Patrick McGuire, *Friendship and Community: The Monastic Experience 350–1250* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988), p. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Carlos Heusch, ‘La philosophie de l’amour dans l’Espagne du XVe siècle’, *Atalaya*, 4 (1993): pp. 233–39.

<sup>3</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx’s *De Spirituali Amicitia* is part of his *Opera Omnia*, in *Corpus Christianorum Continuation Mediaevalis*, ed. A. Hoste and C.H. Talbot (2 vols, Turnhout: Brepols, 1971), vol. 2, PL 195. For an English translation see *Aelred of Rievaulx’s Spiritual Friendship: A New Translation*, trans. Mark F. William (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1994). Recent studies have focused on several implications of spiritual friendships, among which homosexual relationship between clerics. C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 110–14; McGuire, *Friendship and Community*, pp. 297–338. Note that



Spiritual friendship was a matter of authentic affinities and it represented the bridge between supernatural and human dimensions, the connection of which was supposedly proven by the occurrence of wondrous events and miracles. Augustine of Hippo (354–430) argued that miracles were not events against nature, but simply *contra natura cursum*, that is to say against the habitual and standard images of things to which people were used.<sup>4</sup> Similar ideas are discernible in the *SP*:

Miraglo tanto quiere decir como obra de Dios maravillosa que es sobre la natura usada de cada dia; e por ende acaesce pocas veces.<sup>5</sup>

[A miracle, that is to say a marvellous work of God, surpasses what is done by Nature every day, and for this reason it does not often occur.]

The plausibility of those preached or recorded miracles were not questioned in terms of logic and rationality until the twelfth century when, once the official process of canonization became a matter of papal administration, the accounts of any wondrous events had to be sworn on the Bible, in front of the Holy Pontiff, and the witnesses had to demonstrate their trustworthiness. Unofficial drafts recounting those events written down by the guardian monks of the shrines were replaced by formulaic records issued by the papal chancery in which the witnesses' oral vernacular narrations lost vigour and spontaneity in their new

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Dante, Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia belonged to the Stilnovo poetic school founded by Guido Guinizzelli in Tuscany (c.1280–1310). The Guelph Cavalcanti is remembered as Dante's closest friend, although Dante poetically condemned him to the Inferno for his atheism. As one of the priors of the Republic of Florence, Dante signed the official expulsion of the representatives of the Black and the White, indirectly condemned Cavalcanti, member of the White faction, to exile during which he died. Read more in Dante, *Vita Nuova*, 3.14, p. 96. See also Dante Alighieri, *Convivio*, ed. France Brambilla Agno (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1995), p. 421; Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia*, ed. Giorgio Petrocchi (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1994); Dante Alighieri, *Vita Nuova*, ed. Marcello Ciccuto (Milano: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, 1984); Jerome Mazzaro, 'From Fin Amour to Friendship: Dante's Transformation', in *The Olde Daunce: Love, Friendship, Sex and Marriage in the Medieval Worl*, ed. Robert Edwards and Stephen Spector (Albany: State University of New York, 1991), pp. 121–37.

<sup>4</sup> St Augustine, *De Genesi ad Litteram*, *Opera* 3.1, trans. I. Zycha (Vienna: Tempsky, 1894); *De Utilitate Credendi*, *Opera* 6.1, trans. I. Zycha (Vienna: Tempsky, 1891); *De Trinitate*, trans. S. McKenna (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1963); *De Civitate Dei*, trans. R.W. Dyson (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> *SP* I:IV:CXXIV.

Latin transcriptions.<sup>6</sup> The types of miracles invoked by the believers varied enormously, ranging from everlasting salvation to the fulfilment of material needs. As a consequence, the relationships between the supplicants and the Holy figures, which the sources frequently labelled as alliances or friendships, were in fact connections in which spiritual, religious and pragmatic aspects often overlapped.

The miracles performed by the protector or dedicator of a shrine were tools of attraction for crowds of believers who hastened there in search of protection and supernatural support. This happened for instance with St William in Norwich, St Godric in Finchale, St Cuthbert in Durham, St Benedict in Monte Cassino and Fleury or St Faith in Conques and Rouergue.<sup>7</sup> In Iberia perhaps the most popular cults were those of St James (Santiago) and St Isidore, whose images and fame became central in both contemporary and later artistic, historical and folkloric production.<sup>8</sup> Not surprisingly their miracles also occupy a relevant position in the Alfonsine chronicles.<sup>9</sup>

Together with examples of Christian hagiography, the miracle collections dedicated to, and inspired by, the Virgin Mary are paramount of this medieval devotional panorama. Her holiness did not need to be proved, nor were her wondrous actions restricted geographically, even though it was a common practice to associate a topographical title to her name. Of oriental origin,

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<sup>6</sup> An interesting example is that of miracles worked on children, which by the twelfth century began to include medical notes to prove their authenticity. Ronald C. Finucane, *The Rescue of the Innocents: Endangered Children in Medieval Miracles* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997). For a complete study of the medieval perceptions of the most famous Western European miracle stories see Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event 1000–1215* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind*, pp. 33–109.

<sup>8</sup> *Liber Sancti Jacobi: Codex Calixtinus*, ed. Juan J. Moralejo and María José García Blanco, trans. Abelardo Moralejo, Casimiro Torres and Julio Feo (Santiago de Compostela: Xunta de Galicia, Consellería de Cultura, Comunicación Social e Turismo, 2004); *The Miracles of Saint James: Translations from the Liber Sancti Jacobi*, trans. Thomas F. Coffey, Linda Kay Davidson and Maryjane Dunn (New York: Italica Press, 1996); Richard A. Fletcher, *Saint James's Catapult: The Life and Times of Diego Gelmírez of Santiago de Compostela* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Lucas de Tuy, *Milagros de San Isidro*, ed. Antonio Viñayo González, trans. Juan de Robles (León: Universidad, Real Colegiata de León, Cátedra de San Isidoro, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> An example is *EE* 629, 'De como Sant Yague parescio en suenno a este rey don Ramiro et dell esfuerço quel dixo, et de como el rey don Ramiro uencio a l[o]s moros' [How Saint James appeared in King Ramiro's dream revealing the struggle waiting for him, and how the King won over the Moors]. The *EE* refers to Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada and Lucas de Tuy as main sources for this episode. For more details see Thomas D. Kendrick, *St. James in Spain* (London: Methuen, 1960), pp. 19–23.

the cult of Mary was widely spread across Europe by the eighth century, after Byzantine fugitives, threatened by the Iconoclastic movement which flared up in Constantinople, exported Mary's visual representations to the West.<sup>10</sup> Not only were her images preserved, but also accepted by the papacy. In time, the attitudes towards the Virgin Mary changed: addressed as *Theotokos* (God's bearer) since the Council of Ephesus in 431; in the ninth century a reverential respect was dedicated to her as mother of the Redeemer; a sense of reliance and trust predominated in the tenth century and from the twelfth century a new monastic approach – the celebrated exponent of which was St Bernard – transformed the service to the Blessed Lady into an emotional relationship. By the thirteenth century she also acquired the title of Queen of Heaven and of merciful *mediatrix* (mediator) between God and mankind.<sup>11</sup>

It was in the thirteenth century that Marianism reached its apogee, thanks also to the extensive devotional writings both in Latin and in the vernaculars.<sup>12</sup> The *Miracles de Nostre Dame* by Gautier de Coincy, the *Sermones Vulgares* by Jacques de Vitry,<sup>13</sup> the anonymous collection *Liber miraculorum sanctae Mariae Rupe-Amatoris* describing the wonders of the Virgin of Rocamadour, the *Miracles de Notre-Dame de Chartres* by Jean le Marchant, the Italian *Laudes de Virgine Maria* by Bonvesin de la Riva are some among the numerous examples.<sup>14</sup> The Iberian Peninsula was not spared from such a phenomenon either, achieving

<sup>10</sup> Miri Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London: Allen Lane, and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Robert N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c.1215–c.1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 136–91.

<sup>11</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary through the Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 129–36; Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine. Vol.3: The Growth of Medieval Theology (600–1300)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 68–73, 160–73; Jean Leclercq, François Vandenbroucke and Louis Bouyer, *Histoire de la spiritualité chrétienne. La spiritualité du Moyen Age* (Paris: Aubier, 1961), pp. 307–11.

<sup>12</sup> David A. Flory, *Marian Representations in the Miracle Tales of Thirteenth-Century Spain and France* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), pp. 15–23; Elizabeth Johnson, 'Marian Devotion in the Western Church', in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. Jill Raitt (London: SCM Press; New York: Crossroad, 1988), pp. 392–414; Jesús Montoya Martínez, *Las colecciones de milagros de la virgen en la Edad Media: (el milagro literario)* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1981), pp. 44–55.

<sup>13</sup> Rather than as a vision, in eight of the stories of this collection the Virgin is presented as a symbol of religious orthodoxy.

<sup>14</sup> See also the *Miracles of the Blessed Virgin* by Johannes Herold and the Latin *Miracula Beate Marie Virginis* proceeding from the manuscript MS Thott 129 found in Copenhagen, available in later editions and anthologies. For more details on the European medieval Marian miracle collections see Montoya Martínez, *Las colecciones de milagros*, pp. 55–74.

a memorable climax during the reign of Alfonso X, a fervent Marian devotee himself. Under his rule, the cult of Mary became progressively more politicized since it was associated with the Christian victories over the Muslim enemies. The Holy Lady had already become the symbol of the Spanish 'Reconquest', as already reported by the chronicles of the late ninth century and their connected legends. It was believed, for example, that in 722 King Pelagius (r. c.718–37) had received the Virgin Mary's aid in battle and, once he gained the crown of Asturias, he rewarded her with great honours and with the title of protector of the Asturian territories. The need to secure the frontier territories in the South was partially fulfilled by their recognition as Marian lands and by converting the previous Muslim devotional places into churches named after the Virgin.<sup>15</sup> Ferdinand III, for example, turned the mosque of Córdoba into a Christian cathedral<sup>16</sup> and Jaime I of Aragon did the same with the churches in the newly conquered territories of Majorca, Murcia, Valencia and Alcira.<sup>17</sup> Myths and legends also contributed to legitimize the conversion of Islamic sites into Marian shrines. According to most of the Marian miracles, in fact, the defeat of the enemies and the simultaneous discovery of some holy pictures or statues which had been hidden during the siege, served to reinforce the idea of a Christian right over those territories. A well-known cycle is the group of miracles recounting the marvellous deeds of Santa María del Puerto, which happened in Jerez, Seville and in other areas nearby.<sup>18</sup> At that time those locations represented some of the most dangerous and unstable districts of the Peninsula, since they were the nearest harbour which the Muslim forces could use for a counteroffensive.

<sup>15</sup> The example of Toledo is noteworthy. See also *EE* 510–511; *CSM* 2 and Gonzalo de Berceo, *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*, ed. B. Dutton (London: Tamesis, 1980), I; Juan Francisco Rivera Recio, *San Ildefonso de Toledo: biografía, epos y posteridad* (Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1985); Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, *San Ildefonso de Toledo a través de la pluma del Arcipreste de Talavera: estudio y edición crítica de la Vida de San Ildefonso y de la traducción del tratado 'De perpetua virginitate sanctae Mariae contra tres infideles'*, trans. José Madoz (2 vols, Madrid: C.S.I.C., Instituto Francisco Suárez, 1943).

<sup>16</sup> J. Fernández Valverde, ed., *Roderici Ximenii de Rada, Historia de rebus Hispaniae sive Historia Gothica (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis, vol. LXXII)* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1987), vol. II, ch.1047, pp. 733–4 and ch. 1125, p. 767. See also Julie A. Harris, 'Mosque to Church Conversions in the Spanish Reconquest', *Medieval Encounters*, 3 (1997): pp. 158–72.

<sup>17</sup> On the cleansing of mosques and their consecration to churches see J. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 204–206.

<sup>18</sup> See for example *CSM* 328, 356–59, 364, 366–68, 371, 372, 375–79, 381, 382, 385, 389, 391–93, 398. Pedro Hisan (pseud.) [= Sancho de Sopranis, Hipólito], *Los orígenes del culto de Santa María del Puerto, 1255–1500* (Guión: Jerez de la Frontera, 1935).

Perhaps those narrations were strategically aimed at promoting Marian power and protection and, no less relevantly, at motivating the Christian armies to pursue their advance to the South.

The examples of valorous Christian rulers and knights carrying the banner of the Holy Lady during a military siege recur frequently in both historiographical and literary traditions: from the reverential act performed by El Cid, who converted the Islamic mosque of Valencia into St Mary's Cathedral in 1098,<sup>19</sup> to the protection received by Alfonso VIII during the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212.<sup>20</sup> Mary was depicted as a friend and a mediator, but she also represented a political idea: as the sovereigns of Castile, Navarre, Aragon and Portugal joined their swords in her name, so too could their kingdoms be united under the banner of their shared Marian devotion. Such an ambitious political and spiritual unification was attempted by both King Ferdinand III and his successor, Alfonso X. The latter contributed to the diffusion of the Marian cult both literarily and ideologically through his *CSM*. This collection, as Maricel Presilla argued, was also one of the most powerful instruments used by the Learned King to gain a large popular consensus.<sup>21</sup>

Besides the Alfonsine production, another masterpiece of contemporary hymnology dedicated to the Virgin is the *Milagros de Nuestra Señora* by Gonzalo de Berceo (c.1197–1264), the first Marian collection composed in the vernacular of Castile rather than in Latin. Berceo adopted the metrical pattern of the *cuaderna vía* (fourfold way), perhaps assuming that his poems

<sup>19</sup> There is a charter of endowment which Rodrigo Díaz granted to Bishop Jerome and the cathedral church of Valencia in 1098. Salamanca, Archivo Diocesano, caja 43, legajo 2, no. 72. There are a number of editions of the charter, among which F. de Berganza, *Antigüedades de España*, 2 vols (Madrid, 1719–21), ii. 673–5; Manuel Risco, *La Castilla, y el más famoso castellano* (Madrid, 1792), appendix, pp. x–xiii, available digitally at: [http://bibliotecadigital.jcyl.es/i18n/catalogo\\_imagenes/grupo.cmd?path=10073031](http://bibliotecadigital.jcyl.es/i18n/catalogo_imagenes/grupo.cmd?path=10073031); R. Menéndez Pidal, 'Autógrafos inéditos del Cid y de Jimena en dos diplomas de 1098 y 1101', *Revista de Filología Española*, 5 (1918): pp. 1–20, at 11–13, and R. Menéndez Pidal, *La España del Cid*, 7th edn (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1969), vol. 2, pp. 866–9; J.L. Martín Martín, *Los documentos del Cid Campeador* (Valencia: Grupo de Arte y Bibliofilia, 1992). There is also a shorter edition of the charter, with English translation, in C. Smith, ed., *Christians and Moors in Spain*, 2 vols (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1988), vol. i, pp. 130–33.

<sup>20</sup> Fernández Valverde, ed., *Historia de rebus Hispaniae*, book VIII, ch. 10, p. 273.

<sup>21</sup> Maricel Presilla, 'The Image of the Death and Political Ideology in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *Studies on the Cantigas de Santa María: Art, Music and Poetry: Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Cantigas de Santa María of Alfonso X, el Sabio (1221–1284)*, ed. I.J. Katz and J.E. Keller (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1987), pp. 403–57, at pp. 424–25.

would have been used in preaching and sermons.<sup>22</sup> The realistic descriptions of its didactic stories presented contemporary settings and references to the figures in power; names of specific regions and itineraries; allusions to well-known common stories and popular legends, as well as references to matters of legal administration and canon law.<sup>23</sup> According to Marta Ana Diz, the common acceptance of the veracity of those stories facilitated Berceo's goal to use the miraculous events as evidence of divine power.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, in the CSM realistic details abound and in all likelihood they contributed to increase their appeal among their contemporary audience.

Whereas in the Alfonsine representation and adoption of Marian images in art, architecture and textual evidence one can clearly recognize distinctive peninsular elements, they also suggest a conscious attempt at positioning Iberia within a wider Western European context. Alfonso X – as a never-to-be Holy Roman Emperor – was certainly sowing the seeds to establish a powerful and solid Iberian Christian unity (a message which is also predominant in his historiographical works), which should have been recognized as such first and foremost by his own subjects beyond any devotional frontiers, as well as by other powers beyond the Pyrenees. The adoption of a hybrid architectural style in the newly converted churches (most of which were dedicated to the Virgin Mary) and the creation of the multi-layered poetic system of the CSM aimed at familiarizing the audience with Christian doctrine while recording popular experiences related to the Virgin Mary and the phenomenology of her cult. All this can be read as an additional confirmation of Alfonso's devotionally inspired, but clearly political, plans.

I examined typologies and representations of spiritual friendship which appear in the Alfonsine miracle collection and in the *SP* in another study, the findings of which I will briefly summarize here, as they constitute a fundamental premise to better understand another similar, but not strictly coincident, area: that of religious friendships.<sup>25</sup> In the spiritual connections established either among holy figures or between them and their human devotees, mutuality

<sup>22</sup> Stanzas composed of monorhymed quatrains (assonant in AAAA) of alexandrine verses.

<sup>23</sup> See for example Berceo, *Milagros*, XXV, p. 123.

<sup>24</sup> Ana M. Diz, 'Historias de certidumbre: Los "Milagros" de Berceo (Harriet Goldberg)', *Hispanic Review*, 64 (1996): pp. 391–93.

<sup>25</sup> Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Spiritual Friendship in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile: Images of Interaction between the Sacred and Spiritual Worlds of Thirteenth-Century Iberia', in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Age: Fundamentals of Medieval and Early Modern Culture*, ed. A. Classen and M. Sandigge (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 445–77.



challenged the innate antithesis existing between unequal parties and in particular between secular and supernatural characters. Despite the fact that love could not be given univocally, mutuality did not necessarily imply equality, since the gap existing between the involved parties – such as the Virgin and her devotees, including the king – was in most cases unbridgeable. This might explain why most of those relationships, even if described in terms of friendship, presented signs and peculiarities which resembled symbols and rituals of vassalic structures. In particular, the poetic image of Alfonso X was carefully shaped to embody the perfect link between the two worlds: as God's friend and vassal, the Virgin Mary's most devout friend, and his subjects' righteous lord and protector, the King managed to hold a wide consensus by adopting the ennobling titles and rules of friendship, yet without ever denying the superior positions of the holy powers. Equality in virtues allowed some contact between the two worlds to occur, but their borders were rigidly kept to preserve the established socio-political order.

### Religious Friendship: A Definition

Differently from spiritual connections, those labelled in this study as religious friendships are the relationships forged within the ecclesiastical and monastic communities and between the clergy and their believers. Corrupted by secular and pragmatic goals, they were imperfect and therefore it was only the glorious communion with God, fully achieved in the eternal life, which deserved the appellation of truly spiritual. Following this line of thought, three main typologies of religious friendship are recognizable in the Alfonsine texts under scrutiny: first, the connections between members of the same monastic congregation; second, the relationships between different ecclesiastical orders and the alliances involving members of the secular clergy; third, the links between ecclesiastical figures and their believers. The alliances which flourished under the patronage of the mendicant orders across Europe in the thirteenth century should be also added to this classification, while *hermandades* (brotherhoods), *confradías* (confraternities), guilds and various other equivalent social networks embodied, at least in principle, new horizontal links which should overcome the close hierarchical structures to which the ecclesiastical system conformed.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> *Hermandad et confradria in honore de Sancte Marie de Transfixio, Estatutos de la Confradía de la Transfixión de Zaragoza (1311–1508)*, ed. Antonio Cortijo Ocaña (Zaragoza: Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2004), p. XVIII.



## Friendships within the Cloister: Monastic Charity and Personal Connections

In the *SP* the body-metaphor is used to depict the sovereign as the head of the political system,<sup>27</sup> but it is also employed to describe the ecclesiastical structure and the result is tantalizing:

... dixo san Pablo que santa egleſia era como cuerpo et los ſervidores della como miembros que la mantienen en ſu fuerza, et ſerviéndola bien fácela ſer apueſta: ca bien aſi como del corazon del home reciben todos los miembros vida, aſi de ſanta egleſia reciben bien fecho et mantenimiento todos los que la ſirven; et eſte bien ſon los beneficios et las dignidades que della han et onde ſe mantienen los que la ſirven.<sup>28</sup>

[... St Paul ſaid that the Holy Church was the body, and its ſervants the members, who preſerved its ſtrength by ſerving it well, and contributing to its adornment. For as all the other members receive life from the heart of man, ſo all thoſe who ſerve the Holy Church receive from it advantages and ſupport, and the advantages conſiſt of the benefices and offices which they obtain from it, by means of which thoſe who ſerve it are ſupported.]

The head and the heart ſtand reſpectively for the rational and the emotional parts of man; they both represent the two inſeparable, ſymmetrical, but at the ſame time ſeparate ſources of life which rule human behaviour and attitudes. In *SP I*, where this definition appears, the members to which the heart ſupplies energy and life are predominantly eccleſiaſtic figures; however, the definition of religious community was enhanced to include alſo lay devotees and ſecular canons.

With the eleventh-century Gregorian Reform, monaſtic life was ſubjected to renewed rules and friendship acquired a privileged poſition. As Pope Gregory himſelf ſtated: ‘amicus enim quaſi animi cuſtos vocatur’.<sup>29</sup> The influence of this view was reflected in Iſidore of Seville’s words: ‘amicus, per derivationem, quaſi animi cuſtos’.<sup>30</sup> Iſidore focused on the ſpiritual dimension characterizing theſe

<sup>27</sup> *SP II:I:V*.

<sup>28</sup> *SP I:XVI*.

<sup>29</sup> A friend was the guardian of his companion’s ſoul. Gregory the Great, *XL Homiliarum in Evangelia Libri Duo*, trans. David Hurst (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1990), Homil. 27.4, P.L. 176:1207.

<sup>30</sup> A friend for affinity is a guardian of the ſoul. Iſidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum ſive Originum Libri XX*, ed. Wallace M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Preſs, 1962). See in particular Book 10 ‘*De Vocabulis*’.

links, since the parties involved were sanctioned with full responsibility for mutual salvation, a goal which they could only achieve through the intimate knowledge of the other's feelings and thoughts. When applied to monastic relationships this model proved quite flexible since the reciprocal exchange might not subsist: ideally, a monk should show sincere *affectus* (definition which appeared from the twelfth century, although lacking a clear distinction between sensation and emotion) without claiming anything – not even corresponding love – in return. Moreover, tight personal relationships of *diathesis* (links involving selected people only) were frequently forbidden. The Franciscan rule, for example, without denying completely the possibility to make friends within the monastery, forbade any intimate contacts between the brethren, reproaching in particular those encounters kept out of the brothers' and followers' sight.<sup>31</sup>

*SP I* includes norms regulating monastic life, pacts of love, respect and alliance which the monks vowed to their superiors, their brothers, the secular clergy and their believers. Not much evidence is given of the risks that monks took in sharing the same environment with their companions and it seems that contacts between them were devoid of any sexual presumption. The law stated that none of the members of a monastic order was to live alone, but they rather had to share space and time with their brethren. An incautious reading of some of these laws could lead to misinterpretation, as for *SP I:VII:XV*:

... como solien á las vegasdas haber en costumbre en algunos monasterios que en los dias de las fiestas dexaban pocos en la claustra et salia el convento con el abat fuera del monasterio á comer carne.<sup>32</sup>

[... a custom which prevails in certain monasteries, where, on holidays a few of their number are left in the cloisters, and the main body of monks, along with the abbot, leave the monastery to eat meat.]

It is difficult to assert whether or not something scandalous was meant by referring to a few monks left alone in the cloister. By contrast, two explicit points were made: the rigid prohibition of consuming meat on penitence days

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<sup>31</sup> Particularly when involving the opposite gender. A well-known case is that of St Francis and St Clare, whose amity was preserved from any intimate contact to prevent ambiguous situations, rumours and doubts about the nature of their relationship. Reginald Hyatte, *The Arts of Friendship: The Idealization of Friendship in Medieval and Early Renaissance Literature* (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1994), pp. 72–73.

<sup>32</sup> *SP I:VII:XV*.

and the idea that these were shared pleasures among the members of monastic communities.

Moreover, *SP* I:VII:XIV explains that:

Otrosi deben guardar que non fablen en la elesia, nin en el refitor, nin el dormitorio nin en la claustra, fueras ende en lugares contados et á ciertas horas segunt la costumbre de aquel monasterio en que vevieren.<sup>33</sup>

[Moreover, they should be careful not to speak in the church, or in the refectory, or in the dormitory, or in the cloister, except in stated places and at stated hours, according to the customs of the monastery in which they live.]

The rules of keeping silence and speaking only in established areas of the monastery at fixed hours of the day also seem to confirm the duty of observance of the rules, rather than insinuating the possibility of experiencing scandalous relationships favoured by physical proximity. The monastic experience of life took place in physical spaces shared by holy men, who dedicated themselves to the supreme task of honouring God.<sup>34</sup>

However, even if monks were allowed to share their monastic spaces, in those cases in which they had to live in locations different from a monastery, such as a castle or a parish church, they were forbidden from living on their own:

... han de estar con él otros frayles: et esto mandó santa elesia por confortarle, et por darle esfuerço que pueda lidiar con los diablos, et con el mundo et con su carne, que son enemigos del alma: ca segunt dixo Salomon, en cuita está el que vive señoero, porque si cae en pecado non ha quien lo ayude á levantar porque salga dél.<sup>35</sup>

[... he must be accompanied by other friars, and this the Holy Church commanded in order to comfort him and give him strength to be able to contend with the devil, with the world, and with the flesh, which are the enemies of the soul. For as Solomon said: 'he who lives alone, lives in trouble, because, if he falls into sin there is no one to assist him to rise, that he may escape from it'.]

<sup>33</sup> *SP* I:VII:XIV.

<sup>34</sup> *SP* I:XII:I.

<sup>35</sup> *SP* I:VII:XXIV.

Therefore, the participation in a communal life implied the mutual responsibility of checking the other members' reliability since '... ca maldat de un home farie á muchos errar de aquellos con quien hobiese vida.'<sup>36</sup> Such a reading of the *SP* suggests that the pillar of monastic coexistence was not simply the genuine love shared among the parties, but rather the need for mutual control.

An apparently paradoxical affirmation appears in *SP* I:VII:XXIX, which reports how monks should despise any temporal goods and live in solitude: '... ca monge tanto quiere decir en griego como guardador de sí mesmo, et en latin uno solo et triste; ca debe ser señero apartándose para rogar á Dios ...'<sup>37</sup> The withdrawal from the tempting secular world was recommended, but without denying the profitable experience of mutual assistance, which could be achieved within the monastic space, since the latter was an isolated, but simultaneously communitarian, world itself. The lack of any reference to close connections between two or a few members of the same *coenobium* was coupled with the prohibition of any favouritism. This was regarded as an indispensable condition in order to prevent envy, jealousy and disorder among the brethren. *SP* I:VII:XV, for example, deals with the risk of a superior favouring some of the monks of his community by donating food as a reward for their merits. What the law specifies is that such gifts should be given as an allowance to endure discipline and for this reason they should take place outside the refectory to avoid any scandal.<sup>38</sup> In the monastic communities equality between the parties must be preserved, ergo material and personal rewards had to be shared uniformly, at least in principle. In reality, the gap between the moral norms proposed by the law and their practical applications was sometimes unbridgeable.

Similar definitions of religious friendships appear in the *CSM*, in which ecclesiastical corporations and monastic groups were very often defined as *compaña*, while their members acquired the titles of *compannon* (*CSM* 67, 85, 261, 284, 297, and so on) or *companneyra* for a nun (*CSM* 71, 285, and so on). On the one hand, such definitions suggest the idea of a compact and homogeneous group in which no individual prevailed over the others. On the other hand, such a harmonious collective life was described as being devoid of any personal feelings and emotional exchanges. In fact, in the entire *CSM* there is hardly any textual reference to personal friendships among the brethren. By contrast, any

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<sup>36</sup> ... As the weakness of one man will cause many of those with whom he lives to err. *SP* I:VII:XIX.

<sup>37</sup> ... The word monk signifies, in Greek, a keeper of one's self, and in Latin, one who is alone and sad: for he should be solitary by going aside to pray to God ... *SP* I:VII:XXIX.

<sup>38</sup> *SP* I:VII:XV.

relationships classifiable as friendships developed according to established rules and in some cases they presented overwhelming paternalistic connotations.

The supposedly egalitarian monastic life did not exclude internal fragmentations and unequal distribution of powers. This explains why, as reported also in the *SP*, cloistered monks had to obey their superiors and swear loyalty to the rule to which they belonged:

Et estos atales son llamados religiosos, que quier tanto decir como homes ligados que se meten so obediencia de su mayoral ... profesion llaman al prometimiento que face el que entra en órden de religion, quier sea varon ó muger ... de ser obediente al que fuere mayoral en aquel monasterio o veviere.<sup>39</sup>

[Such persons as these are styled members of the monastic orders, which means men bound by obligations, who have made themselves subject to obedience to a superior ... The promise which a party, whether man or woman, who enters a monastic order makes is ... to be obedient to the superior of the monastery in which he lives.]

*CSM* 187 confirms this legal proposition. The protagonists are an abbot and the monks of a monastery which was originally a synagogue sold by the Jews to the Apostles, who later turned it into the first church in Syria. The monks were tempted to abandon the monastery as famine had deprived them of any supplies, but the abbot managed to keep them together in the name of their common faith and by invoking the Virgin's aid (lines 34–42). The friendly appellatives which appear in this miracle are more likely to be rhetorical formulae based on the idea of belonging to the same Christian brotherhood rather than implying any personal and emotional connections between its members.

Moreover, as for the secular context, in which members of the highest social ranks referred to their peers and subordinates as *amigos* while the reverse never occurred, the same happened within the cloister. A thought-provoking case is *CSM* 274, the protagonist of which is a friar who promised a robe of prayers to the Virgin, but he did not complete it because, tempted by the devil, he left the monastery and the robe unfinished. The Holy Mother appeared in front of him and suggested – calling him *amigo* (line 60) – that he should return to the cloister and finish the garment since he would expire in one year's time. In his farewell greeting to the rest of his monastic community, the friar hailed his brethren as *senhores meus* (my lords; line 64). Even though the friar surely was

<sup>39</sup> *SP* I:VII:I–II.

a praiseworthy devotee, who deserved the Virgin's pardon and intercession, he was clearly not allowed to overstep his position within the ecclesiastical pyramid, which confined him to a subordinate level. CSM 384 is another case in point. A devout friar fell gravely ill and another one was appointed by the abbot to stay at his side. The Virgin Mary appeared to the ill patient and took him to Paradise leaving only his name painted in the *Book of Lives*. When the nursing friar, who had fallen asleep in the meantime, realized that a miracle had occurred, he recounted the event to the abbot and to the rest of his community using vassallic formulae and an undeniable reverential tone to address them (lines 55–58).

These lexical varieties were not exclusively an Alfonsine peculiarity. In other miracle collections members of religious communities were also defined differently according to their positions.<sup>40</sup> In Lucas de Tuy, for instance, the lexicon of companionship appears when referring to individuals living within the cloister and occupying uneven positions.<sup>41</sup> Later, Berceo adopted the notion of *sancta compaña* to identify a homogeneous corporation lacking any excelling or superior figure, whose presence would threaten and alter such a delicate balance.<sup>42</sup> What all these miracle collections have in common is that the term *hermanos* was adopted unflinching for and between individuals who occupied similar positions, while in most of the connections involving subordinate parties, that appellation was frequently replaced by titles related to companionship or friendship, the latter being adopted as a powerful rhetorical device of *captatio benevolentiae*.

## Outside the Cloister: Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and the Secular Clergy

SP I:VII:XXX clearly defines the differences between monastic and secular orders. Common rules, such as the duty of chastity and poverty, obedience to the superiors and prohibition of leaving their authorized abodes without permission characterized both of them. Moreover, '... los canónigos seglares pueden morar solos, habiendo razon derecha por que lo fagan, lo que no pueden facer los monges ...'<sup>43</sup> The lack of any compulsory obligation to live in shared spaces with their brothers was not the only difference between the two orders. The rules imposed on the secular clergy were objectively less strict than the monastic

<sup>40</sup> Lucas de Tuy, *Milagros de San Isidoro*, see for example Chapters XL, LII, LXI, LXXII, pp. 78, 105 and 116.

<sup>41</sup> Some examples: Lucas de Tuy, *Milagros de San Isidoro* XL, LXXII, p. 95 and p. 79.

<sup>42</sup> An example is Berceo, *Milagros*, XII, p. 64.

<sup>43</sup> ... Canons of the regular clergy can live alone, where there is good reason for their doing so, which monks cannot do ... SP I:VII:XXX.

ones. Nonetheless, a rigid pyramidal fragmentation existed, which allowed only certain kinds of personal exchanges to take place at different levels. Whereas a cleric who entered a religious order had to submit to the rules and to renounce his goods, including his vassals, the highest members of the secular order were exonerated from those restrictions and, contrarily, they were favoured with further concessions.

In the *SP* the Aristotelian idea of equality as a medium to build a *perfecta amicitia* (perfect friendship) was distorted completely in favour of a status which was aimed at safeguarding the harmonious condition of love among those who shared the same dioceses and religious spaces:

Et aun los santos padres tovieron que era bien por otra razon que estos grados fuesen en santa eglesia, porque los homes hobiesen por ellos ayuntamiento veradadero de amor et de paz que durase entre ellos.<sup>44</sup>

[The Holy Fathers also adduced another reason to confirm the utility of such rankings within the Church, so that true union of love and peace could last among them.]

*SP* I, from title V to IX, deal respectively with prelates, priests, regular clergy, monastic vows and individuals allowed to order excommunication and interdict. The distribution of powers was described as irreversible in the sense that the subordinates were usually not able to impose their decisions and jurisdictional rights over their superiors.

The law considered all aspects of religious life, with particular emphasis on duties and rights that clergymen held according to their status. As God's friends:

... et que no eran siervos, mas amigos, et que non eran huéspedes nin avenedizos, mas de su casa, como aquellos á quien dió poder de saber las poridades de los sus fechos.<sup>45</sup>

[... they were not his servants, but his friends, and not mere guests, or acquaintances, but rather members of his own household, to whom he gave the power of knowing the secrets of his acts.]

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<sup>44</sup> *SP* I:VI.

<sup>45</sup> *SP* I:V:I.



Depicted as new Apostles, they deserved reverence and respect from both religious and secular communities. A bishop ‘... ha poder sobre los clérigos dél en lo temporal et en lo espiritual, et sobre los legos en las cosas espirituales ...’ even though he must fulfil the same duty of respect and obedience towards the Pope (*SP I:V:V*).<sup>46</sup> The latter was allowed to behave freely, as long as he demonstrated that his actions would benefit the Christian community.<sup>47</sup>

In *SP I:XXII:XVII*, heavily relying on canon law, prohibitions and concessions were issued to avoid the insidious threats of arrogance, pride, avarice and thirst for power:

Et esto facen contral derecho que dice que en la elesia deben estar en lugar honrado et mas alto que los otros, mas en casa deben ser como compañeros de los clérigos: pero esto deben facer de manera que se non afagan mucho á ellos de guisa que se les tornase en desprecio.<sup>48</sup>

[Such conduct is contrary to the law which says that in the church they ought to have a higher and more honourable place than the others, but at home they should be the companions of the priests, yet they should act in such a way as not to be too familiar with them, so as to render themselves liable to be treated with contempt.]

The law would neither ignore nor obscure the weak points affecting the ecclesiastical structure, including the presence of corrupted components, unequal distribution of concessions and forms of favouritism. The warning against any *perlado barajador* (quarrelsome prelate) is revealing:

... que non sea barajador el perlado es porque quando estos atales non pueden complir por su soberbia lo que quieren, puñan de se allegar á los príncipes, e de ser lisonjeros et maldecientes, diciendo mal de aquellos que desaman, trabajándose de desatar el bien que facen, et metérlos en mala fama et en mal prez: et aun sin esto suelen ser envidiosos de la buena andancia de los otros, et mintrosos de su palabra, et descubridores de las poridades que les dicen, et arrebatosos por se vengar del pesar que les facen.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> ... He has authority, in temporal as well as spiritual matters, over the priests of his bishopric, and over laymen in spiritual matters ... *SP I:V:XVI*.

<sup>47</sup> *SP I:V:V*.

<sup>48</sup> *SP I:XXII:XVII*.

<sup>49</sup> *SP I:V:LIV*.

[... the second reason why a prelate is forbidden to be quarrelsome is, because when such men, through their arrogance, cannot accomplish what they wish, they try to attach themselves to princes, and to become flatterers and detractors, speaking evil of those they dislike, attempting to nullify the good which the latter do, and to give them a bad reputation and evil notoriety. And, even without this, they are accustomed to be envious of the good fortune of the others, lying in speech, betrayers of secrets told them, and quick to avenge themselves for annoyances which they suffer.]

Religious communities resembled, at least according to these legal definitions, secular institutions characterized by favouritism, physical discrimination, social and economic gaps, which sometimes generated bonds more similar to vassalage than sacral or spiritual connections.<sup>50</sup> Outside the monasteries, however, the majority of such ecclesiastical connections implied exchanges of confidence, secret speeches, advice and protection of the other's thoughts, which would suggest the existence of more intimate bonds than mere companionship:

... otrosí el perlado debe tener consigo en su cámara clérigos honestos ó otros homes de órden quel sirvan, et que sepan qual vida face en su poridat, et que sean testigos dello; et de los bienes que vieren en él tomen enxiemplo bueno de que se aprovechen.<sup>51</sup>

[... moreover, a prelate should have priests and other men in religious orders, who are honourable, to serve him, and who know what life he leads in secret, and may be witnesses of it, as well as of the excellence which they see in him, that they may follow his good example and profit by it.]

Whereas none of the Alfonsine laws explicitly forbade clergymen to establish personal contacts with other members of their communities, they were neither particularly appreciated nor recommended. What was openly forbidden were contacts with women, especially when they were not close relatives and when they lacked moral constraint (*SP I:VI:XXXVIII*). Similar warnings, addressed to the clergy, as well as to the entire Christian community,<sup>52</sup> were issued against individuals charged with papal excommunication.<sup>53</sup> The idea which accrued

<sup>50</sup> *SP I:VI:XXV*, for example, clearly states that men with physical malformations were not allowed to receive the holy order.

<sup>51</sup> *SP I:V:LIX*.

<sup>52</sup> *SP I:IX:XXXIV*.

<sup>53</sup> *SP I:IX:XXXVII*.

from those norms is that no personal contact should be allowed outside the imposed social and religious orthodoxy.

Undeniably, most bonds between clergymen were motivated by personal goals and attempts to achieve or safeguard practical benefits. Alliances and pacts of friendship agreed between bishops with the aim of defending their own dioceses, as well as their lives and privileges, were common practices around medieval Europe. Already in early Merovingian and Carolingian courts the politically influential bishops signed alliances which

were clearly more than simple bonds between Episcopal confreres; they were entirely comparable with the secular friendship alliances ... which were intended to ensure help and support in all areas of life.<sup>54</sup>

In Iberia similar bonds were officially subscribed by bishops and high prelates even though the duties and responsibilities that they implied reverted, fully or partially, onto their communities, that it to say onto both their religious brothers and lay subjects.

### The Church and the Wider World: Clergymen and Believers

Christian believers acquired a safe and legitimized position in society thanks to baptism and the other sacraments which forged their identities as *amigos de Dios* (God's friends) and antagonists of the infidels. The vocabulary related to fraternal love and friendship was used by clerics to ennoble their paternalistic attitudes towards their followers. An example is *EE* 318, in which St Silvester addressed all his listeners as 'hermanos et hijos' [brothers and sons]: a rhetorical device adopted to reinforce the sense of Christian brotherhood connecting them. The list of examples increases significantly when examining the *CSM*. The austere scene described in *CSM* 65 is a case in point. The Pope appears, surrounded by a group of counsellors and by all the Christian suppliants looking for aid and advice. Yet, the protagonist of this miracle song is not the head of the Church, but a humble man who, incapable of reaching the Pontiff, sought some advice from one of the Pope's counsellors. The title *amigo*, used by the counsellor to address the poor man, created an empathetic bridge which put the monk closer

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<sup>54</sup> Gerd Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers: The Political Importance of Group Bonds in the Early Middle Ages*, trans. Christopher Carroll (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 79.

to the Christian believer and contributed to dignify the miserable status of the latter. What is intriguing is that by the end of the narration the humble man had still not received any advice from the Church's minister. This supports the hypothesis that, rather than symbolizing an effective friendship, the epithet of *amigo* was skilfully used to convince people of the trustworthiness and protection offered by certain relationships. In the end of *CSM* 65, the believer's soul was rescued by the support of a foolish man who, despite his ambiguous and debilitated condition, behaved as a true friend and a wise advisor. Nonetheless, his efforts never awarded him the title of friend, but only the denomination of *companheiro* (companion).

*CSM* 15 gives rise to further reflections. It tells the story of the unfair relationship between the Roman Emperor, Julian (d.363 AD), and St Basil. The latter paid an act of homage to the Emperor, but he was rewarded ungratefully with the menace of destruction of his monastery. In order to cope with such a threat and to convince his believers to pray for the Virgin's intervention, Basil summoned his community and opened his speech by addressing them as 'amigos meus' (my friends, line 73). Public authorities adopted such linguistic manoeuvres to assure the *captatio benevolentiae* of their believers through public speeches, sermons, didactic and miracle stories.<sup>55</sup> Similar rhetorical strategies are discernible in Berceo's *Milagros de Nuestra Señora* in which the author, a man of the Church himself, addresses the audience by using a range of formulae which ran from the general 'amigos e vasallos de Dios omnipotent' (friends and vassals of the Almighty God) to the apparently more intimate and binding 'sennores e amigos, compaña de prestar' (gentlefolk and friends, excellent company).<sup>56</sup>

Friends, counsellors, advisors, guides, confessors, but also tutors and protectors in the name of God: these were the key functions fulfilled by clergymen in their connections with the laity. Additionally, whereas the proof of pure amity relied on the preservation of a secret, any clergymen fulfilled such a duty by prescribing the holy services of confession and penitence. In fact, according to *SP* I:IV:LXXXV, breaking the confessional secrecy constituted

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<sup>55</sup> For an overview see: Martin Camargo, *Medieval Rhetorics of Prose Composition: Five English 'Artes Dictandi' and Their Tradition* (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995); James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); Rita Copeland and Ineke Sluiter (eds), *Medieval Grammar and Rhetoric: Language Arts and Literary Theory, AD 300–1475* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). More specifically on thirteenth-century Iberia see Jesús Montoya Martínez, *La norma retórica en tiempos de Alfonso X, el Sabio* (Las Gabias, Granada: Adhara, 1993).

<sup>56</sup> Berceo, *Milagros*, n. 2, 8, 21, 23.

an act of iniquity and the cleric who committed such an act of betrayal was considered a counterfeiter. As shelters and keepers of the believers' spiritual secrets, clergymen behaved as intermediaries before God, as well as within their community. An example of this is *EE* 966, which describes the dynastic struggle that broke out after Alfonso VI's death in 1109. The Aragonese king, Alfonso I (r.1104–34), who had separated from his wife Urraca (Alfonso VI's daughter), invaded the Castilian and Leonese territories, plundering the churches he came across as he did so. The supporters of Urraca's son by Raymond of Burgundy, Alfonso VII (r.1126–57), sprang into action in defence of those territories to stop the Aragonese invasion. Fearful that this conflict could favour a Muslim advance, the bishops and prelates of Castile, León and Aragon joined together with the intention of mediating between the two rival monarchs. They suggested that the infant Alfonso VII, without any fear of losing his honour, since he was still considered a child, should ask Alfonso I of Aragon to leave his kingdom in peace in return for his loyalty. The latter replied:

'... Et pues que agora gracia et amor me demanda, non le quiero tener nada de lo suyo, et daqui adelante ge lo dexo todo' ... E alli firmaron pazes et amor entressi, que despues non ouo entrellos guerra nin desamor ninguno.<sup>57</sup>

[ '... and since you are asking me for mercy and love, I do not want to keep anything which belongs to you, and from now on I will leave you everything' ... And there they signed a pact of friendship between themselves, and there was neither war nor discord between them from that moment onwards.]

The intervention of the Bishop, later Archbishop, Diego Gelmírez in the development of these events (as recorded in the *Historia Compostellana*)<sup>58</sup> is wholly omitted in the Alfonsine chronicle and, by contrast, the undifferentiated ecclesiastical community of bishops and prelates occupied a central position. All of them played the role of wise counsellors and mediators, beyond that of supporters of a political alliance, which would have safeguarded the defence of Christendom, at least on the Iberian territory.

Far from any idealization, religious men of any faiths were not devoid of negative characteristics, above all when they were victims themselves of false friends. An example is *EE* 478, which presents Muhammad, at that time a

<sup>57</sup> *EE* 966.

<sup>58</sup> *Historia Compostellana*, ed. E. Falque Rey (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988), I:4:17–18.

merchant, travelling between Egypt and Palestine and dwelling with the communities of Jews and Christians who lived there:

... e mayormiente con un monge natural de Anthiochia, que auie nombre Johan, que tenie el por su amigo et era herege; et daquel monge malo aprendio el muchas cosas tan bien de la nueua ley como de la uicia pora deffender se contra los iudios et los cristianos quando con ellos departiess ...

[... above all with a monk from Antioch named John, who was his friend but he was also an heretic; from that bad monk he learned many things both of the new and the old laws, to defend himself in any debates with Jews and Christians ...]

The heretic monk behaved like a friend only in appearance. In fact, by teaching Muhammad lies and blasphemies against God, he contributed to his damnation.

Those figures pinpointed for their negative connotations were not always heretics or believers of a different faith; they could simply be victims of vices and uncontrolled passions. *EE* 711, telling the story of Fernán González's imprisonment and successive rescue by Sancha of Navarre, is a case in point. Once the archpriest of the castle where Fernán González was imprisoned discovered the unauthorized presence of Sancha, he received the Count's appeal:

'amigo, ruegote que nos tengas poridad; et si lo fizieres, prometote que te de en Castiella una cibdad de las meiores que y ouiere, assi que sienpre la ayas por tu heredad'.

['my friend, I pray you to keep our secret; and if you do it, I promise I will give you one of the best cities of Castile in perpetuity'.]

The opening sentence seems to convey the idea of a close relationship, reinforced by the fact that the counterpart was a clergyman. But, a line later, one realizes that more practical interests were at stake, as that was an attempt to bribe the prelate. Surprisingly, not only was the archpriest not offended by the proposal, but he asked for additional favours. He proposed to have sexual intercourse with Sancha and to keep that occurrence as a further secret between them. Sancha replied: 'amigo, todo lo que uos queredes quiero lo yo fazer de grado ... ca mucho ualdra mas que partamos el peccado nos todos tres'.<sup>59</sup> In her words, *amigo* stands

<sup>59</sup> Oh friend, I want to satisfy all your requests with pleasure ... as it would be worthwhile sharing this sin among the three of us. *EE* 711.

for lover, even though the real plot designed by the jailed couple was that of using such appellation tactically to outwit the archpriest, conquer his trust and then jettison him by stabbing him unexpectedly.

Even though respect and trust towards ecclesiastical and religious figures were attitudes praised in the chronicles and recommended by the law, the Alfonsine records did not hide the fact that there were also cases of corruption and evil. Open to debate is whether such cases were recorded for the sake of objectivity that the sovereign claimed for his works, or they were rather a veiled outcome of the King's personal and unresolved discord with the Curia for his desired, but never achieved, imperial title.

### Religious and Secular Chains: Between Friendly and Vassalic Bonds

The laws and procedures presented in *SP* I, regulating theological and pragmatic aspects concerning ecclesiastical life, are built around the spiritual friendship between God and mankind, as well as around the links established among individuals sharing a common faith. Feudal symbolism applied to both categories.<sup>60</sup> For example, the ecclesiastical structure recalled a vassalic model according to which those occupying the highest spheres behaved like lords. They asserted rights such as summoning councils to which the rest of their subordinates – both religious and secular – had to attend (*EE* 872), expelling treacherous individuals from their dioceses and claiming material and military support from their believers whenever necessary. The Pope acted as the liege lord *per antonomasia*, while the believers:

... quel deben honrar llamandol padre santo et señor ... que quando algunos venieren á él quel besen el pie, et quel honren en todas cosas mas que á otro home.<sup>61</sup>

[... they should honour him by calling him Holy Father, and Lord ... when any persons visit him, they must kiss his foot, and that they must honour him in all respects more than any other man.]

An interesting example is *EE* 873, which narrates of Bernard (c.1050–1125), Archbishop of Toledo, who was summoned by Pope Urban II (r.1088–99) to join the crusade to Jerusalem. The Archbishop started his journey to Rome

<sup>60</sup> *SP* I:VI:XLVIII.

<sup>61</sup> *SP* I:V:VIII.



promptly, but once he left Toledo some disloyal clerics elected a new archbishop and expelled Bernard's loyal vassals. Having received the embassy from his exiled friends, Bernard returned to Toledo and defrocked those who plotted against him. Later, the Archbishop undertook his journey to Rome and offered his loyal services to his overlord, the Pontiff. His act of loyalty and devotion for the crusading cause made the Pope decide to exonerate him from participating in the military campaign and allowed him to go back to Toledo to protect it.

It is interesting to compare the hierarchical structure presented in *EE* 873 with the one which appears in the description of the visit of Pope Calixtus II (r.1119–1224) to Cluny in 1120, as described in the *Historia Compostellana*. When the Pope reached the congregation, he prostrated himself in front of the abbot and the monks who were summoned there. They promptly reacted by bowing down simultaneously, imploring the Pontiff to abandon his prostrate position. There was a clear attempt to subvert traditional vassalic rituals, as the Pope endeavoured to flatter Cluniac favours by addressing them as lords and superiors:

... desidero me confratrem et commilitonem uestrum haberi; uideo enim, quia caritatis uestre excellencia totum fere mundum subiugauit ... Abbatem Cluniacensem precordialissimum meum, monacos Cluniacenses familiarissimos meos fore propemodum uolo.<sup>62</sup>

[... I would like to be considered your brother and companion since I can see how the excellence of your love has already conquered the entire world ... From now on I want the abbot of Cluny to be my fondest friend, and the monks of Cluny my intimate friends.]

At the end of the same chapter of the *Historia Compostellana*, the reason behind Calixtus's behaviour is revealed: the Pope wanted to make public advertisement of his friendship with the order of Cluny, which was the emblem of charity and sainthood, perhaps to distract public attention from the scandalous events which were discrediting the Roman Curia at the time.<sup>63</sup>

In some cases the highest religious and secular figures were involved in personal exchanges, which were characterized by physical and emotional

<sup>62</sup> *Historia Compostellana*, ed. E. Falque Rey (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988), II:XIV, p. 248. English trans. mine.

<sup>63</sup> Mary Stroll, Calixtus II (1119–1124): A Pope Born to Rule (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

manifestations of closeness. The friendship between the martyr St Painucio and Emperor Constantine (d.337AD), as recounted in the *EE*, is a case in point:

... auie ell emperador Costantino tan grand amor et onraua lo tanto que lo abraçaua, muchas uezes et besaua en aquell oio diestro que auie sacado.<sup>64</sup>

[... the Emperor Constantine loved and respected him so much that he used to hug and kiss him several times on the eye that had been removed.]

Neither of the two protagonists bowed reverentially towards the other, but they rather behaved like peers. In any case, either for relationships based on pure love or defined by reverence and esteem, ritual gestures were central as they contributed to legitimize those contacts in the eyes of both those involved and those who witnessed them.

### A Case of Religious and Political Friendship: The Military Orders

A discussion of religious friendships cannot exclude mention of brotherhoods agreed within and between military orders. These *militiae Dei* (God's armies), which included both religious and secular members, flourished in the first half of the twelfth century from an inner transformation experienced both in society and into the Church.<sup>65</sup> The Temple, the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, St Lazarus, St Mary of the Teutonic Temple, St Thomas of Acre and the St Sepulchre are known as universal orders, as they were established in the Holy Land with the aim of protecting the pilgrims while regaining those territories

<sup>64</sup> *EE* 319.

<sup>65</sup> Carlos de Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares hispánicas en la Edad Media (siglos XII-XV)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons; Arganda del Rey, Madrid: Latorre Literaria, 2003); Carlos de Ayala Martínez, 'Tópicos y realidades en torno a las Órdenes Militares,' in *Tópicos y realidades de la Edad Media*, ed. E. Benito Ruano (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2002), pp. 105–56; Carlos de Ayala Martínez, 'La monarquía y las Órdenes Militares durante el reinado de Alfonso X,' *Hispania* (Spain), 178 (1991): pp. 409–65; Alan Forey, 'The Military Orders, 1120–1312' in J. Riley Smith (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 184–216; Alan Forey, *Military Orders and Crusades* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1994); Alan Forey, *The Military Orders, From the Twelfth to the Early Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Macmillan, 1992); Manuel González Jiménez, 'Relaciones de las Órdenes Militares con la corona castellana,' *Historia Instituciones Documentos*, 18 (1991): pp. 209–22; Desmond Seward, *The Monks of War: The Military Religious Orders* (London: Methuen, 1972; repr. London: Penguin, 1996).

to the Christian faith, and freeing their inhabitants submitted to the Islamic yoke.<sup>66</sup> Between 1160 and 1180, together with these pre-existing international *militiae*, new Iberian regional orders, such as Calatrava, Santiago, Évora-Avis and San Julián del Pereiro-Alcántara, were formed.<sup>67</sup> In the Iberian Peninsula the pretext of the Holy War was in many cases an excuse adopted by the monarchs to employ these monks in arms to pursue their own plans of territorial expansion and control of the unstable frontier areas.

The Alfonsine works describe numerous pacts of *hermandades* (brotherhoods) agreed among the members of each military order, between the different congregations and between them and the secular rulers. Issued with official approval by the Pope and other Christian monarchs, the military orders constituted proper institutions.<sup>68</sup> In the Iberian Peninsula, they received support by the Crown directly, and with the same Crown they often signed pacts of friendship and alliance. This was perceived as perfectly legitimate, as the defence of Christendom was the orders' official prerogative. Therefore, Christian monarchs were indirectly allowed to require the intervention of the *militiae Dei*, whenever their kingdoms were threatened by external or internal enemies.

The Spanish military orders were regulated by an internal hierarchy in which the master of the order, usually a bishop or a prior, held uncontested authority, above all if he was a *maestre caballero*: a spiritual guide also able to coordinate and instruct his subordinates in the battlefield. The religious connotations which one would expect to characterize the descriptions of these masters are not particularly emphasized; by contrast, personal interests and revenge often moved them, as the example below suggests:

Otra vegada acaescio que siguiendo otrosi mucho los moros o el maestre del Tenple posaua, por los escarmentar ende et por se vengar de algun enoio que dellos auie reçibido, caualgo en la grant madrugada, et echoseles en çelada.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Luis García-Guijarro Ramos, *Papado, cruzadas y órdenes militares (Siglos XI-XIII)* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1995).

<sup>67</sup> Derek W. Lomax, *Las Ordenes Militares en la Península Ibérica durante la edad media* (Salamanca: Instituto de Historia de la Teología Española, 1976).

<sup>68</sup> As suggested by Ayala Martínez, the Benedictine-Cistercian model, to which Calatrava, Alcántara and Santa María de España (the latter founded in the thirteenth century by Alfonso X of Castile) conformed, applied to affiliated monks who adopted the military protocol and knightly behaviour. The other format – followed by the order of Santiago – included laymen and knights who decided to submit to the religious discipline and rules.

<sup>69</sup> EE 1106.

[Another time it happened that, as the Muslims followed the master of the Temple wherever he stopped, in order to give them a lesson and to take his revenge for some annoyances which he had received from them, he rode early in the morning and he ambushed them.]

The masters' authority was not incontestable as it rigidly depended on the rules of the order and on their brethren's will to elect them.<sup>70</sup>

O'Callaghan argued that the pacts of friendship between members of the orders 'reveal a continuing desire to achieve a true spiritual fraternity which could be translated into cooperative action on the field of battle'.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, those religious-military alliances were easily undermined by envy originated by matters of donations, benefits and land-boundaries. For this reason, these friendships 'tried to imbue their knights with a sense of brotherhood which transcended immediate loyalties to one order or to the other and encouraged them to regard themselves as members of a single community united by a common purpose and a common discipline'.<sup>72</sup> O'Callaghan's statement seems to be confirmed when considering examples such as *EE* 1012, which emphasizes the sense of community experienced within the orders during the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, when all behaved as a unique force in arms, joined in the defence of their shared faith.

It seems here that both fraternal and communitarian ideals were mainly used for rhetorical purposes and political propaganda. The support given to the master of the Hospital, as described in *EE* 1099, for example, emphasizes the martial aspect of that intervention. The description of the attack led by don Gutierre, Bishop of Córdoba, and Sancho, Bishop of Coria is explicit about this point:

... con su conpanna de caualllo et de pie; et a guisa de omnes esforçados que auian sabor de librar sus cristianos de muerte de sus enemigos, començaron a yr acorrerle a todo el mas grant yr de los caualllos.<sup>73</sup>

[... with their infantry and cavalry; and by recovering all their strength in order to free their Christian companions from the threat of death inflicted by the enemies, they assaulted that place with all their horses.]

<sup>70</sup> Ayala Martínez, *Las órdenes militares*, p. 194.

<sup>71</sup> Joseph O'Callaghan, 'Hermandades between the Military Orders of Calatrava and Santiago during the Castilian Reconquest, 1158–1252', *Speculum*, 44 (1969): pp. 609–18, at p. 609.

<sup>72</sup> O'Callaghan, 'Hermandades between the Military Orders', p. 616.

<sup>73</sup> *EE* 1099.

This narration, together with others such as *EE* 1100 and 1101, emphasizes the bellicose features of those alliances against the Muslim enemies, rather than focusing on a strong sense of brotherhood, which was meant to regulate those corporations.

The military orders represented the spiritual and secular compromise of an age in which bewildered individuals looked for protection and certainties both in their daily lives and in their spiritual search for eternal salvation. The brothers who swore an oath to the order assumed the moral obligation of loyalty and defence of Christendom, of the believers and of their territories. The characteristics of those friendships differed whether the engaged parties were the religious orders exclusively or they also involved other secular powers. In the first case, the members of one order offered their military succour and shelter to other religious *militiae*; in the second, military service was provided claiming material benefits and properties in return. When such coalitions involved the king, they became proper political alliances in which the master had to pay vassallic homage to the sovereign, who possessed the authority of granting, renewing or revoking his concessions.

The highest-positioned members of the military orders frequently joined the political life of a kingdom, sometimes even becoming royal administrators and military advisors. However, as for any other form of friendship, their pact could end abruptly as soon as the original conditions were lost or more profitable agreements were signed. Alfonso X experienced it personally when, due to his frontier policy, he wanted the military orders to move their settlements to the troubled frontier areas. His plans created obvious discontent among the masters of the orders to the point that some of them joined the nobles who rebelled against Alfonso X in 1272.<sup>74</sup> In cases of broken friendships involving the military orders, they could be re-established only if certain conditions were given. For example, don García Fernández, master of Alcántara, managed to repent and regain Alfonso X's favour (as attested by the *privilegio rodado* conceded to him in 1283), while others lost his favour forever, since their betrayal had taken them to a point of no return.

The use of idealized formulae of friendship to define relationships within or with the military orders conforms to what seems to be a sort of 'rhetorical policy' widely applied to diverse fields. Definitions of friendship were probably meant to endow those agreements with the highest moral ground, even if in fact they were strategically aimed at achieving pragmatic goals.

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<sup>74</sup> *Crónica de Alfonso X. Según el Ms. II/2777 de la Biblioteca del Palacio Real (Madrid)*, ed. Manuel González Jiménez (Murcia: Real Academia Alfonso X el Sabio, 1998). Explicit reference, for example, at pp. 240–41.

## Alfonso X and the Military Orders

A brief historical overview will help unravel a few thorny issues, such as the discrepancies between the instructions given in Alfonso X's didactic works and his own political behaviour, as well as the symbols and metaphorical images presented in his chronicles which, although recording past events, had clear resonance of what the King experienced personally. Centralizing power and making everybody pay homage and obedience to the king, including the military orders, were key points in Alfonso X's ambitious political plans. Not only did he personally choose the candidates as leaders of the orders, who were usually very close to the court (like the master of Alcántara, Pedro Ibañez, nominated master of Calatrava in 1254; and Pedro Núñez, appointed master of Santiago in 1280), but he also tied them in a chain of natural-vassalic dependence. Alfonso X masterfully managed to create a sort of double-locked vice, which gradually restrained them both legally, by granting *rentas* and possessions in return for loyalty and military service, and personally, through pacts of friendship which linked them to the sovereign directly. The *privilegios rodados* issued by the sovereign and collected in the *Diplomatario andaluz* provide numerous examples of this.<sup>75</sup> Some of these concessions, although recording the names of the masters as first addressees of the concessions, were in fact privileges granted in perpetuity to the entire order, as confirmed by the fact that the validity of the terms were also applied to their successors.

Around 1270 Alfonso X founded the atypical *confradía* of Santa María de España, a military confraternity with naval characteristics, managed by the infant Sancho IV.<sup>76</sup> General opinion holds that Alfonso X's patronage of the confraternity was undertaken propagandistically as a further act in praise of the Virgin.<sup>77</sup> It has also been interpreted as an attempt to emulate his German ancestors, who had already and strategically supported the Teutonic orders in

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<sup>75</sup> *Diplomatario andaluz de Alfonso X*, ed. Manuel González Jiménez (Sevilla: Fundación de El Monte, Caja de Huelva y Sevilla, 1991). They were official documents presenting a circular device (*signo rodado*) which contained the king's name imprinted at the bottom. On the side of the *sello* there were the names of the signing parties, if present. However, from the thirteenth century, nobles and other eminent figures were mentioned, independently from their actual attendance. Evelyn S. Procter, 'The Use and Custody of the Secret Seal (*sello de la poridad*) in Castile from 1252 to 1369', *The English Historical Review*, 55 (1940): pp. 194–221.

<sup>76</sup> Juan Torres Fontes, 'La Orden de Santa María de España', *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, 3 (1977): pp. 73–118.

<sup>77</sup> This was a typical formula used in the letters of donations and concessions to the order. *Diplomatario Andalus*, doc. 451, pp. 475–76 and doc. 458, pp. 485–87.

the attempt to include them in their sphere of influence. Undeniably, personal devotion, ideological and political control over the Christian subjects and the need for self-preservation after a series of revolts were all elements behind the King's decision to support this confraternity. The affiliation of royal paternity was originally termed *confradía* (confraternity), while the denomination *orden de caballería* (military order) appeared for the first time in some documents produced in the Aragonese chancery in 1274 and the Order was officially confirmed in 1277.<sup>78</sup> Why Alfonso X claimed a form of religious ratification, but avoided an Apostolic one, is not difficult to guess, as the latter would have imposed papal restrictions and control over his choices. For Alfonso X the attempt to keep the two spheres of the Church and the state apart was no new effort. In fact, he officially never imposed his legislative power over the Church, which was rigidly regulated by canon law, but he included that same code into his *SP* (Book I). In such a way he presented himself as the guardian of those norms, without sabotaging their supremacy, at least as far as spiritual matters were concerned.

Despite the sovereign's precautionary moves, friendships with the military orders were not always easy to keep and in case they were lost, great dangers could occur to the same rulers who had, in the first instance, enforced them. This is precisely what happened during the turmoil set in motion by Sancho IV's rebellion, when the military orders, inflamed by the discontent generated by the policy of centralization promoted by Alfonso X, joined the aristocratic cause. Pedro Núñez, master of Santa María, promoted a series of *hermandades* against the King. As recorded in the *carta sellada* dated 13 July 1282 (Seville) about how Alfonso X took Montemolín from the Order of Santiago to give it to the counsel of Sevilla, the monarch rewarded the citizens of Montemolín for their loyalty to the royal cause and for their refusal to obey the Order, since its members:

... deservieron errando contra nos como agora fizieron el maestre don Pero Nunnez, a quí nos fizimos tantas merçedes e bienes que los no podríamos poner en carta, e los freyres desta Orden que se acordaron con él, alçandosenos con nuestra tierra, e fizieron al nuestro linage que se alçase contra nos, pora tollernos nuestro poder e nuestro sennorío, no quisimos que lo nuestro ficase en ellos, más que tornase a nos.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Juan Torres Fontes, 'La Orden de Santa María de España,' *Miscelánea Medieval Murciana*, 3 (1977): pp. 73–118. See the documents in the appendix of Torres Fontes's study.

<sup>79</sup> *Diplomatario andaluz*, doc. 501, pp. 528–29.



[... they disobeyed and betrayed us like master Pedro Nuñez, towards whom we acted so mercifully and with so many favours which cannot be listed on paper; and the members of this Order joined him, rebelling against us with our lands, and they pushed our lineage to fight against us in order to deprive us of our power and supremacy. We do not want our possessions to fall in their hands, but rather to return in ours.]

What justified the military orders' interventions were both the need of defence of the true faith against the threatening forces of the infidels and their preservation against any cases of disloyalty. This would explain why Sancho IV was able to claim the orders' support against his own father, as Alfonso X was accused of unorthodox behaviour when receiving military aid by Abū Yūsuf (r.1258–86), emir of the Benimerines. In a similar way, Alfonso X's factions blamed Sancho IV for his alliance with Muhammad II (Abū Abd Allāh, r.1273–1302), emir of Granada, and for the excommunication that he had received from Pope Martin IV (r.1281–85).

Both the Alfonsine works and his personal experience suggest that the pacts of amity and protection signed between the King and the religious *militiae* were characterized by deeper political and pragmatic implications. In general, most connections based on strong religious models presented different façades and it was not so rare that amicable titles and formulae were consciously used to ennoble what were in fact pragmatic agreements. Religion worked as a cohesive tool connecting the parties in the name of their shared faith and devotion, which made them feel like friends and brothers in God's name, without ever escaping the internal ranking which characterized both secular and monastic communities.

## Chapter 4

# Political Friendships

Hence it is evident that the state is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. (Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I)

### Ancient and Modern Interpretations

Political friendships have always been attractive fields of research, the study of which has generated a kaleidoscope of definitions and interpretations concerning both their nature and typologies.<sup>1</sup> Among others, Jacques Derrida remodelled and adapted classical definitions of political friendship to the structures of modern democratic systems.<sup>2</sup> His voice was not isolated and significant debates arose between modern communitarian thinkers and liberal philosophers.<sup>3</sup> In spite of their modernity, all those theories bear the mark of the earliest speculations on the subject, which hark back to Plato and Aristotle.<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> Sibyl A. Schwarzenbach, 'On Civic Friendship', *Ethics*, 107 (1996): pp. 97–128; John M. Cooper, 'Political Animals and Civic Friendship', in *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. Neera Kapur Badhwar (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 303–26; Judith Nisse Shklar, 'Politics and Friendship', *Proceedings of The American Philosophical Society*, 137 (1993): pp. 207–12; Horst Hutter, *Politics as Friendship: The Origins of Classical Notions of Politics in the Theory and Practice of Friendship* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> Communitarian thinkers were torn between the idea of an exemplary friendship aimed at the common good and the awareness of the absence of such a noble feeling in their contemporary society. Liberal philosophers, instead, argued that tolerance and social respect were the fundamental prerogatives for the survival of any democracy. Michael J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); *New Communitarian Thinking: Persons, Virtues, Institutions, and Communities*, ed. Amitai Etzioni (Charlottesville and London: The University of Virginia Press, 1995); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, trans. David Ross, rev. J.L. Ackrill and J.O. Urmson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980); Plato, *Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, 2nd edn (London: Penguin Books, 2003). See also Lenn E. Goodman and Robert B. Talisse, *Aristotle's Politics Today* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007); Jean-François Pradeau, *Plato and The City: A New Introduction to Plato's Political Thought* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002); Thanassis Samaras, *Plato on Democracy* (New York and Oxford: Peter

latter, especially, elaborated the notion of *politiké philia* and added that such a relationship was not necessarily dependent on any private and emotional links between individuals.<sup>5</sup> On the contrary, *politiké philia* was experienced whenever people were naturally gifted with a sense of moral justice, which rendered them sensitive to respect others and, therefore, to guarantee the political and social stability of their community.<sup>6</sup> Yet, any political – which was also public – friendship was considered imperfect if it excluded one's private life, which represented the only ambit within which *amicitia* could be established. Cicero added concord and utility to the list of factors influencing political relationships:

Hominum coetus quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis iuris consensu et utilitatis communione sociatus.<sup>7</sup>

[Fellows are not just people joined together, but a group of individuals sharing a juridical agreement and certain common interests.]

This clearly emphasized the idea of a shared mind-set, rooted in common cultural backgrounds, traditional values and geographical origins, which were considered the most fertile grounds on which natural collaborations between people might flourish. These classical definitions, filtered through Roman

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Lang, 2002); Anthony Price, *Love and Friendship in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, extended 1997); Paul Schollmeier, *Other Selves: Aristotle on Personal and Political Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Nancy Sherman, 'Aristotle on Friendship and the Shared Life', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 47 (1987): pp. 589–613; Frederick Rosen, 'Obligation and Friendship in Plato's *Crito*', *Political Theory*, 1 (1973): pp. 307–16; John T. Bookman, 'Plato on Political Obligation', *The Western Political Quarterly*, 25 (1972): pp. 260–67; *The Phaedrus, Lysis and Protagoras of Plato: A New and Literal Translation Mainly From The Text of Bekker*, ed. J. Wright (London: Macmillan and Co., 1921).

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 1, p. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Mulgan, 'The Role of Friendship in Aristotle's Political Theory', in *The Challenge to Friendship in Modernity*, ed. Preston T. King and Heather Devere (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 15–32; Aristide Tessitore, *Reading Aristotle's Ethics: Virtue, Rhetoric, and Political Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996); Suzanne Stern-Gillet, *Aristotle's Philosophy of Friendship* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995); Bernard Yack, *The Problems of a Political Animal: Community, Justice, and Conflict in Aristotelian Political Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Cicero, *De republica*, repr. from the 3rd edn of Cardinal Mai, Rome 1848, and trans. G.G. Hardingham (London: B. Quaritch, 1884), I, 39.

formulae and practices, were the seeds of later medieval theorizations which developed across Europe.<sup>8</sup>

### Political Friendships in the Alfonsine Works

An accurate analysis of the types of pragmatic *amicitiae* regulated by the Alfonsine law and how they frequently developed into military and diplomatic armistices – as it is seen in the narrative of historical events presented in the *EE* – throws new light on how political friendships were perceived and enacted in thirteenth-century Iberia. The works patronized by Alfonso X cannot be seen as the indicators of a completely new perception of those political alliances, the leading ideas of which derived from the most ancient conceptions on this subject. However, a careful work of adaptation to the needs of his thirteenth-century court was masterfully achieved.<sup>9</sup> For example, the Aristotelian idea of social and political commitment of citizens endowed with self-justice was part of the classical legacy left to Alfonso X:

E por ende dixo Aristotiles que si los homes hobiesen entre sí verdadera amistad, non habrien meester justicia nin alcalles que los judgasen, porque la amistad les farie complir et guardar aquello mesmo que quiere et manda la justicia.<sup>10</sup>

[For this reason Aristotle stated that if true friendship existed among men, they would have no need of courts or magistrates to judge them, because friendship would cause them to do and to observe what justice orders and directs.]

The corollary seems to be that legal impositions had not the full right to exist as coercive tools since people would act for the others' and for their own sake spontaneously, without being taught or ordered to do it.

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<sup>8</sup> On the Roman concepts and practices of friendship see Koenraad Verboven, 'Friendship' in M. Peachin (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 404–21. On the idea of friendship networks in Medieval Europe, see Julian Haseldine, 'Friendship Networks in Medieval Europe: New Models of a Political Relationship', *Amity: The Journal of Friendship Studies*, 1 (2013), pp. 69–88.

<sup>9</sup> See introduction to the *Primera crónica general*, ed. R. Menéndez Pidal (Madrid: Gredos, 1977), p. XXXIV.

<sup>10</sup> *SP* IV:XXVII:I.

In view of the fact that written treaties before the twelfth century were extremely rare, it would be difficult to establish which terms, duties and benefits were agreed by each party to those alliances. The turning point was represented by a more regular formulation of those pacts, as referenced in municipal *fueros*, *cartas pueblas* and *privilegios rodados*.<sup>11</sup> However, even the comprehensive legal code of the *SP*, whilst recognizing the value of general treatises of friendship, provides only vague indications concerning their actual formulation. This seems to suggest that conventional forms of friendships were regarded as the legacy of enrooted customary practices that the law could not ignore, rather than as legal solutions that it would endorse. Illuminating in this respect is an example which appears in the chronicle *EE* 679, about the legendary judge, Nuño Rasura:

...de lieue pocas uezes libraua pleytos por juyzio; mas antes punnaua en abenir los omnes por amiztat et por amor en los pleytos que uinien ant ell, que non por afrontarlos por sentencia de juycio.<sup>12</sup>

[... he rarely brought a lawsuit by judgment, but he first tried to achieve concord between those who were summoned in front of him in the name of friendship and love, instead of using a judicial sentence.]

Once again, the idea of an innate individual moral justice prevails on any juridical impositions. The law was a didactic one and, in some cases, a coercive instrument which proved powerful and efficient only when interpreted as the externalization of individuals' remarkable moral statures.

Significantly, an unequivocal definition of political friendship, even within the Alfonsine production, proves difficult. Nevertheless, different typologies can be clearly outlined: on the one hand, there were the social agreements between citizens, based on a shared sense of justice; on the other hand, the alliances stipulated between individuals or groups which swore mutual protection in order to fulfil a mission or to receive either military or economic support. This first

<sup>11</sup> Like in other European contexts, also in Iberia the oral rituality and symbolism characterizing these agreements predominated until the twelfth century, when the written formulae experienced a progressively wider success. Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993), p. 12 and p. 149. See also Esther Pascua, 'Peace among Equals: War and Treaties in Twelfth-Century Europe', in *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History*, ed. Philip de Souza and John France (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 193–210; Esther Pascua, *Guerra y pacto en el siglo XII: la consolidación de un sistema de reinos en Europa occidental* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1996), pp. 40–48.

<sup>12</sup> *EE* 679.

split was complicated further by the subdivisions to which the second category (friendship based on interest) was frequently subjected, since it might include relationships between peers (including monarchs, rulers and Popes), as well as between members of different social ranks, who would owe and receive advantages according to the terms established by the pacts that they agreed. As Esther Pascua argued, the terminology adopted to define these links reflects the double nature of inter-feudal agreements: on the one hand, there was *amicitia* based on kinship, coexistence and group identity; on the other hand there were juridical pacts of *convenientia*, based on shared interests between the involved parties.<sup>13</sup>

In the Alfonsine *corpus* there are no explicit lexical references to political friendships, but a range of terms related to companionship, kinship and feudal connections frequently appears. *Companna* (company), for instance, was a definition generally attributed to any military congregation constituted with the aim of providing mutual support on the battlefield and, therefore, it rarely implied any personal and emotional connections. An instance of this is *EE* 3 in which the title of *compannas* is attributed to the tribes which progressively invaded and occupied the Iberian territories. A close reading of this passage reveals that, except for the unity derived from their ethnic origins, any other form of social unanimity was impossible to achieve because of their continuous internecine struggles for power. This seems to suggest that political friendships could exist only in a context in which authority was clearly defined and consolidated, while mere military alliances were more likely to serve as weapons to force, or even destroy, already weak internal balances.

Bearing medieval social stratification in mind, the affiliation of two or more rulers who agreed to share the duties of power is an interesting case to examine. The *EE* presents several examples in which a sovereign decided to allot his throne – or at least the duties related to it – to a *compannero*, who was connected to him by blood and parental ties, as the following examples suggest:

E luego que fue alçado Decio por emperador, tomo a su fio consigo por compannero en ell imperio ...<sup>14</sup>

[Once Decius was crowned as Emperor, he entitled his son as companion in ruling the Empire ...]

<sup>13</sup> Pascua, *Guerra y pacto en el siglo XII*, p. 44; Adam Kosto, *Making Agreements in Medieval Catalonia: Power, Order, and the Written Word, 1000–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> *EE* 264.

[Constantine] alço por emperadores a Costantino et a Costancio et a Costante sus fijos, et dioles por compannero et por egual en el sennorio a Dalmacio Cesar su sobrino, por las bondades que en si auie et por que se semeiaua mucho a el.<sup>15</sup>

[[Constantine] nominated his sons Constantine II, Constans and Constantius as emperors, and he gave them Dalmatius Caesar, his nephew, as a companion and peer in lordship, for the goodwill that he had shown and for the fact that he resembled very much the Emperor himself.]

[Valentinian] recibio por compannero et por egual dessi a Valente, su hermano, et fizo lo llamar augusto.<sup>16</sup>

[[Valentinian] received his brother Valente as companion and peer, and he entitled him Augustus.]

... el rey don Ramiro tanto fue de grand bondad et de grand medida et tanto amaua all hermano, quel fizo consigo compannero en el regnado.<sup>17</sup>

[... King Ramiro was so benevolent and moderate and he loved so much his brother, that he made him his companion and shared his kingdom with him.]

This was not an exclusive Western European phenomenon. Likewise, in the Islamic system of rule, the co-operation between lieges was regarded as a worthwhile opportunity. The Alfonsine chronicles tell us that in 722, when the Christian armies advanced towards the 'Reconquest' of the Iberian Southern territories occupied by the Muslim forces, the Arabic caliph Omar (Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, r.717–20), who succeeded Zulema (Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik, r.714–17), took power, but he summoned his brother, Yazid (Yazid bin Abd al-Malik, r. 720–24), as his companion in rulership.<sup>18</sup> Omar, according to his habits and nature, behaved wisely, which, together with his unwillingness to use brute force to set order in his dominions, contributed to create his eulogized portrait as a friend of his people:

Este Omar seyendo muy rico de auer et complido de todas buenas mannas, quitosse quanto el mas pudo de guerrear et de batallas; e tanto fue de sofrido

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<sup>15</sup> EE 330.

<sup>16</sup> EE 350.

<sup>17</sup> EE 630.

<sup>18</sup> EE 570.



et sabroso a todas las yentes, que non sabien todos que onrra le dar por ello, nin que loor; ca nol onrrauan nil loauan tan solamientre los suyos, mas en uerdad los estrannos de las otras tierras ... maguer moro ...<sup>19</sup>

[Omar, who was a wealthy man, endowed with all good manners, tried to avoid as much as he could wars and battles; and he was so much appreciated and revered by his people that they did not know what honours and praises they should pay him for all that; and not only did his people honour and praise him, but even foreigners and dwellers of other lands did the same ... despite the fact that he was a Muslim.]

Unlike the chronicles, the Alfonsine law (*SP II:I*) envisages a warning to the emperor, who should never share his power with anyone else, as this would undermine his position and debilitate his role:

... por toller desacuerdo de entre las gentes et ayuntarlas en uno, lo que non podrien facer si fuesen muchos los emperadores, porque segunt natura el señorio non quiere compañero nin lo ha menester ...<sup>20</sup>

[... to remove discord from among the people and unite them; this could not be done if there were many emperors, because according to nature, sovereignty does not require a companion, nor does it need one ...]

The legal code, which resembled in many aspects the paradigm of a *speculum principis*,<sup>21</sup> contains another section regulating the same subject (*SP II:V:XVI*), which also advises kings about how to protect themselves and their plans by being careful about revealing their secrets to those who claimed to be friends, without first proving their reliability.

Amicable agreements were regarded as a means to achieve, impose and perpetuate power, mostly by avoiding the use of violence. A brief historical note is needed to clarify by which factors this Alfonsine perspective was influenced. Formed as a kingdom in 1035, Castile was a powerful growing force, heavily involved in wars both against the other Iberian Christian kingdoms and against

<sup>19</sup> *EE* 570.

<sup>20</sup> *SP II:I:I*.

<sup>21</sup> Roberto J. González-Casanovas, 'Courtly Rhetoric as a Political and Social Code in Alfonso X: The Prologues to the *Espéculo* and the *Siete Partidas*', in *Medieval Iberia, Essays on the History and Literature of Medieval Spain*, ed. Donald J. Kagay and Joseph T. Snow (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), pp. 129–42.

the wealthy and prolific Muslim powers in the South. The weakness of the Peninsula, split by centuries of internal conflicts and threatening foreign forces, made treaties of peace indispensable to be agreed both between the Christian sovereigns themselves, and between them and their respective courts and subjects. Royal power was strictly dependent on public concord and friendship was the instrument to preserve and safeguard social order.

This general statement is substantiated by a number of examples proceeding from the *EE*, most of which go back to Roman history, an era which Alfonso X saw as a role model for the generations to come. Similar strategies of using historiography as a means of legitimization were already adopted, for example, by Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada (c.1170–1247), who even wrote his *De rebus Hispaniae* in Latin despite the fact that the vernacular was already in use in several official contexts under the patronage of Ferdinand III. The reason behind his linguistic choice was, in all likelihood, the attempt to pursue and claim some continuity with the Romano-Gothic tradition, which would have legitimized the claims of the Iberian Christian kingdoms. Perhaps the extensive parts and attention dedicated to Roman history in Alfonso X's historiographical works could be also seen as a means to counterbalance the fact that his chronicles were instead written in the vernacular of Castile.<sup>22</sup> In any case, Roman history was considered a source of inspiration and exemplary behaviour in any fields of both public and private lives. *EE* 23 is an example, as far as the value of friendship as a means to preserve social order is concerned. The chronicle recounts how the Romans conquered the local tribes 'por amistad que pusieron con algunos de ellos' rather than by adopting coercive means, which were used only when absolutely necessary.<sup>23</sup>

Particular emphasis is also put on the fact that the Roman conquest alternated between periods of violent raids and episodes of benevolence that the incomers practised towards the invaded population. One significant episode is that of the brothers Scipio, sent as delegates from Rome who, after crossing Gaul and facing Hannibal (d. c.182 BC), descended through the Pyrenees:

Entonce començaron a falagar a los omnes de la tierra et a prometelles et fazelles bien por ganar los et pasar los assi; assi que se les tornaron una grand partida dellos, et a los que pudieron auer por amor no les quisieron fazer mal, et a los otros matauan los et astragauan los quanto mas podien.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 1, pp. 59–64.

<sup>23</sup> For the friendship they had with some of them. *EE* 23.

<sup>24</sup> *EE* 24.

[Then, they began to flatter people of that place and to make promises to them and to perform good in order to obtain and keep their benevolence; so, they managed to have a huge number of them on their side, and they did not harm the conquered people who submitted voluntarily to them, while they killed and harmed as many as they could of those who refused to do so.]

In this case, however, it would be appropriate to talk about rules of siege and submission to the strongest power, since the support provided to the new rulers was perhaps more the result of fear rather than of natural benevolence felt towards them.

Another noteworthy example is *EE* 26, in which it is explicitly said that during the conflict between the Roman army and Hasdrubal (d.207 BC)'s forces, the former vacillated at the beginning because they did not receive any support from the citizens of the foreign land that they were invading. Despite those first difficulties, once the Romans defeated their adversaries, showing their military supremacy: '... los Romanos començaron a ganar la tierra lo uno por amor, lo al por fuerça'.<sup>25</sup> This example should be borne in mind as a useful indication for the classifications which will be discussed later, regarding political friendships involving individuals of unequal status, whose reasons to forge an alliance were frequently material necessities, fear and the need for protection.

Moreover, victory and occupation did not guarantee power to last and its preservation was usually entrusted to military force and diplomacy. Political alliances responded to those needs by supplying mutual defence and truces between the parties. The events which followed Hasdrubal's demise are a case in point: Scipio (d.211 BC), in order to preserve his embassy and therefore his power, '... puso otrossi amiztades con aquellos que touo por que podrie meior acabar so fecho ....'<sup>26</sup> Friendship represented the most effective tool to cement power, to build and to guarantee the longevity of a steady and peaceful social system. Mutual love between dwellers of the same country, and between them and their sovereigns, were also considered crucial to preserve such a peaceful living.

In the Alfonsine collections, friendship was presented as fundamental in everybody's lives: neither could an individual live without a friend nor could a social and political system survive without the mutual agreement and coexistence of its members. Kings, emperors and rulers did not transcend such a pattern either: they needed to behave in an amicable manner towards their

<sup>25</sup> ... The Romans began to conquer the land on the one hand by using goodwill, and on the other by adopting violence. *EE* 26.

<sup>26</sup> ... He made friends with those that he considered useful to fulfil his plans ... *EE* 34.

subjects, while the latter were morally and legally obliged to respect and love their lords, a feeling which was likely to proceed naturally from the respect and love that they ought to feel for themselves and for their community.

### Rules of Political Friendship: Loyalty and Betrayal

Both the theoretical legal norms and the episodes recorded in the chronicles revealed that loyalty, goodwill, respect and wisdom were, also in a political sense, indispensable features which men should possess in order to be revered as valuable friends. A case in point is the episode of the infant Alfonso VIII of Castile (r.1158–1214) who fought against the arbitrary imposition of his uncle Ferdinand II of León (r.1157–88), when the latter sought to usurp his legitimate possessions. Conforming to principles which would be also stated by the Alfonsine law – that is to say that people should love and protect their king reverentially (*SP* II: XIII) – the Castilian subjects supported the infant Alfonso VIII not only in order to defend his legitimacy, but also in the name of the moral obligation that they felt towards him, their fellow-citizens and towards themselves.<sup>27</sup>

As for any other form of friendship, betrayal was contemplated as a sin, which would harm the others, as much as it would generate scorn and bad reputation for those who committed it. Such a conception justifies the presence of explicit admonitions against the authors of malevolent actions, who should neither be trusted nor allowed to enter any friendly relationship, especially with the king. The description of Antoninus Pius' behaviour presented in *EE* 210 is eloquent. As Roman Emperor, Antoninus Pius (d.161 AD) was accustomed to honour and praise those who showed him loyalty and defended his interests, while:

... a los malos dizie les, muy mansamiente et con buena uoluntad, que non podien seer amigos dell emperador por los fechos que fazien.<sup>28</sup>

[... to the evil people he used to say, calmly and with goodwill, that they could not be friends of the emperor for the bad actions that they committed.]

The consequences derived from a traitor's actions were deleterious for the political and military enterprises which the betrayed individuals were trying to fulfil, since their actions were seriously menaced by the disclosure of secret plans

<sup>27</sup> *EE* 990.

<sup>28</sup> *EE* 210.

to the enemy. An example is that of Charlemagne in war against the Muslim forces, which were advancing from the interior areas of the Iberian Peninsula towards the Pyrenees. As for the famous account of this episode presented in the epic lines of *The Song of Roland*<sup>29</sup>, also in the Alfonsine chronicles the Emperor's military action failed due to the betrayal of one of his men:

Et dize don Lucas de Tuy que en veniendo, que cerco a Tudela, et ouierala presa synon fuese por la traycion que fizo y vn conde que andaua en su companna, que auia nombre Galaron, que era de conseio con los moros.<sup>30</sup>

[And Lucas de Tuy narrates that, coming towards Tudela, he [Charlemagne] reached it, and he nearly seized it if it was not for the betrayal of a Count who was there in his company, who was named Galaron, who was a counsellor of the Muslims.]

The divulcation of a secret corresponded to an undisputable act of treachery, particularly so if affecting the king:

Otro si deben guardar mucho los del pueblo que non descubran poridat de su rey, ca esto es cosa de que nascen dos males; el uno deshonor et el otro daño ...<sup>31</sup>

[Moreover, people should also be careful not to reveal the secrets of their king, for this is something from which two evils arise; first, dishonour, second, injury ...]

The Alfonsine message is clearly unfolded here: as much as loyalty was the indispensable condition to be considered a friend, treachery condemned those who committed it both in the eyes of their victims, as well as in the opinions of those who were directly or indirectly informed of those acts of betrayal.<sup>32</sup> Such was the case of Sergius Galba (d.69 AD), Roman governor of the province of

<sup>29</sup> There are numerous editions and translations of the Song, some of which are also available online. See for example: Gerard J. Brault, ed., *The Song of Roland: An Analytical Edition*, 1: Introduction and. Commentary; 2: Oxford Text and English Translation (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1978). An online English translation is available at <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/roland-ohag.asp>

<sup>30</sup> EE 619.

<sup>31</sup> SP II:XIII:XXVI.

<sup>32</sup> Richard Firth Green, *The Crisis of Truth* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 208. He argues that treason is distinguishable in a medieval sense within two discrete categories: institutional treason, against the wider communal organization, and personal treason, against private relationships.

Tarraconensis of Hispania, and perpetrator of a series of malevolent actions against the people of Lucena. The Alfonsine chroniclers recount that, after a first battle in which he was defeated, Galba attacked Lucena again, supported by new forces. Fearing his return, the inhabitants of the town of Lucena proposed a peaceful agreement to him. Galba treacherously accepted and summoned them, but that was in fact a stratagem that he used to fulfil his revenge. In fact, he murdered all those who answered his call. His misconduct brought the peninsular inhabitants to react violently both against him and the power he represented:

Esta deslealtad fue muy sonada por toda Espanna, e dalli adelante se alboroçaron todos los espannoles contra Roma mas que numqua fizieran.<sup>33</sup>

[This betrayal was revealed all around Spain and from that moment all the Spanish people rioted against the Romans as they had never done before.]

Treason was also the main feature characterizing the events involving Viriatus (d.138 BC), who fought against the Romans for 14 years, and who, in the end, was murdered by his own people:

Encabo mataron le los sos a traycion, aquellos en que se el mas fiaua; e cuydaron auer de los romanos gualardon, mas ellos non gele quisieron dar por la traycion que fizieran en matar so sennor.<sup>34</sup>

[In the end, he was treacherously killed by his own people, by those that he had trusted; and they tried to have some reward from the Romans; but the Romans did not give them any because of the treachery they had committed by murdering their lord.]

Evidently, the closer the relationships, the more harmful were the consequences of betrayal, as for Emperor Domitian (d.96 AD) who, led by arrogance, committed a series of dreadful actions against his subjects, but

... mas al cabo fue el quebrantado et enflaquecido de coraçon por que entendio que todos sus amigos et sus priuados et sus afforrados andauan conseiando cuemo lo matassen, et mayormente su mugier ...<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> EE 42.

<sup>34</sup> EE 44.

<sup>35</sup> EE 189.

[... in the end he was turned down because he understood that all his friends, followers and those he protected were plotting how to kill him, and among them there was also his wife ...]

The situation reached its nadir with the Emperor's murder, committed by Parthemius, whom he believed to be his trustworthy eunuch. The moral implications behind loyalty and betrayal made these themes central in Alfonso X's scheme of historical change. Moreover, loyalty was 'also a means of recalling the privileged position of the king as representative of God on earth; the flexibility of the concept ensures that it is ideologically useful as a means of bridging empirical fact and perceived destiny'.<sup>36</sup> Thus the king had to be wise and righteous not to incur in the unhappiness of those who surrounded him and who could otherwise usurp his power.

Unlike the classical idea, according to which friendship could flourish every time that two noble souls met, independently from external factors such as age and social status, in the Alfonsine perspective, virtues were still regarded as fundamental parameters. However, it was believed that some categories were genetically encoded with corrupting vices and therefore no relationship was possible with, and between, them. This was the case of Jews, heretics and most women, stereotypically defined as evil-doers and traitors, and therefore inevitably banned as loyal companions.<sup>37</sup>

As Geraldine Coates argued, beyond its negative outcomes, betrayal might have had, at least in some cases, some positive functions, such as regeneration and expiation. This was the case of the foundation myth concerning the formation of a Spanish collective identity, supposedly favoured by the treachery committed by Count Julian, governor of Ceuta, who let the Muslim forces advance in 711 against Roderic (d. 711), the Visigoth King of Toledo, after the latter had raped Julian's daughter. Coates also argued that it was mainly from the sixteenth century that treason began to be more regularly associated with, and defined as, sin. However, rhetorically at least, similar *topoi* were already present in the Alfonsine production, especially in cases of political connections, in which betrayal was contemplated as the worst sin that a person could commit against their friends; a sin which would harm the others as much as it generated scorn and bad reputation for those who committed it.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Geraldine Coates, *Treacherous Foundations: Betrayal and Collective Identity in Early Spanish Epic, Chronicle, and Drama* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2009), pp. 93 and 111.

<sup>37</sup> The aforementioned categories will be discussed in more details in Chapter 5.

<sup>38</sup> This recalls the ethical norms presented in Roman law and customs, see Jacques-Henri Michel, *Grauité en Droit Romain* (Bruxelles: Latomus, 1962), pp. 589–90.



## Pragmatic and Moral Motivations

The episodes discussed up to this point envisage cases of political friendships which were, in fact, mere military alliances aimed at achieving pragmatic results which, once obtained, made the same pacts meaningless to perpetuate. *EE* 429 commemorates how:

Odoacer, ueyendosse en grand cuenta por la cerca que era mui luenga et mui mala, puso su amiztad con el rey Theoderico, et metiosse en su poder et fizol pleyt et omenage de seer siempre a su mandado et del obedecer en todo.<sup>39</sup>

[Odoacer, seeing himself in a dangerous position due to the long and heavy siege, made friends with King Theoderic; he put himself under his power, made homage to him and swore to be always at his service and to obey him in everything.]

General Odoacer, the first king of Italy (r.476–93), paid his tribute of loyalty and submission to Emperor Theoderic the Great (r.471–526) in order to obtain his protection against the incumbent dangers that the Italian campaigns were likely to inflict on his person and army. Evidently, Odoacer's oath was far from being a declaration of goodwill and pure benevolence, but it was rather an opportunistic request. The question which arises is what kind of interests did converge into such political alliances. The analysis of the Alfonsine works suggests a number of possible answers which go beyond the plans of territorial expansion, defence of the frontiers and military protection. In some circumstances political agreements were signed in the attempt to solve either personal or familial situations in which a friend was contractually obliged to intervene; for instance, in rescuing or avenging the offences suffered either by an ally or by one of their closest friends. Some of those duties were explicitly stated by the law, such as the obligation for a friend to rescue his companions in case of imprisonment:

Et el amigo otrosi que con otro hobiese grant amor de voluntat et non le quisiese ayudar en aquello que él pudiese porque saliese de cativo, quando ende saliere puedel decir mal ante el rey ...<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *EE* 429.

<sup>40</sup> *SP* II:XXIX:III.

[Also, a friend who shows great attachment to another but is unwilling to assist him to escape from captivity, once the latter is liberated, he can besmirch his name in the presence of the king ...]

The failure to accomplish all this would be punished with public scorn, shame suffered in front of the sovereign and confiscation of property. This specific example is also emblematic of the fact that rescuing a man was regarded not just as an act of Christian charity, but also as a moral and contractual duty that subjects linked by faith, lineage, vassalic bonds, marital connections and *amor de voluntad* (voluntary agreed friendship) had to fulfill.

In the list of motivations which led individuals or groups to agree pacts of friendship, there were also defence, protection and military support against the intervention of both external and internal enemies. Once again, evidence from the Roman period abounds. Take, for example, the story of Petreus and Afranius. Once the two protagonists realized that the perpetuation of the war between Caesar (d.44 BC) and Pompey (d.48 BC) would have been deleterious as much for their honour as for their people, according to *EE* 101, they decided to submit to Caesar voluntarily and to offer their oath of friendship in return for a truce. The protection of honour, which was also invoked as the principal element that any pact of friendship should defend and guarantee, contributed to resolve this situation.

Yet, defending honour could lead to dramatic consequences, as for the siege and destruction that Hannibal's forces inflicted on the city of Saguntum (inaccurately named Sigüenza in *EE* 19), where the inhabitants were linked in a bond of friendship with the Roman invaders. Witnessing the progressive collapse of all their chances of success, the surviving citizens decided to kill their own companions, as well as their families and friends, rather than abandoning them to the humiliation of a foreign massacre:

E quand ellos uieron que por ninguna guisa no lo podrien soffrir, ouieron so acuerdo que mas ualie que ellos matassen a sos amigos, que no uellos matar e catiuar a sos enemigos. Desi mataron sos padres, e sos fijos, e sos mugieres, e sos amigos ...<sup>41</sup>

[And when they saw that they could not bear that in any way, they all agreed that it would be worthier to kill their own friends, rather than witnessing their murdering and their capture by their enemies. So they killed their fathers, sons, wives and friends ...]

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<sup>41</sup> *EE* 19.

Friendship was a matter of pragmatic interests as much as, in some cases, a moral commitment aimed at safeguarding a friend's life, fame and respectability.

### The Inheritance of Friendship and Enmity

In as much as the comparisons between the general rules of friendship and their applications in the spheres of political agreements are concerned, the principle of inheritance deserves some attention. The classic axiom of *amicus amici, inimicus inimici* speaks for itself: individuals were friends of their companion's friends and, similarly, their friends' enemies turned into their own foes. The same formula might be successfully applied to political relationships and military agreements, which frequently reverted onto the contractors' families, kin groups, clans and offspring, to the extent of being bequeathed to later generations. In consideration of such a diachronic legacy, the promises of peace between kings were dynastically perpetuated, in principle at least, and therefore legitimately preserved.

The transmission of an amicable bond, which in those cases assumed all the characters of a treaty, could be implicitly renewed when the successors shared the same will as their ancestors. The description given in *EE* 990 with regard to the infant Alfonso VIII of Castile (r.1158–1214), Sancho III's (r.1157–58) heir, is revealing:

... que era de abraçarle los omnes et amarle por el priuilegio del padre, esto es, por ell exiemplo de las bondades que el padre fiziera ...<sup>42</sup>

[... people should embrace and love him for the privilege of his father, for the exemplary good actions that his father performed ...]

The official protocol, which forced the parties to respect the terms previously agreed, was far more constrictive than the mere sense of moral duty. Nobody, in those cases, would reject or withdraw from their obligations, on pain of denunciation as a betrayer. This explains the request of aid made by Count Sancho García (d.1017) to the kings of León and Navarre in order to take revenge against the Muslims who had killed his father:

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<sup>42</sup> *EE* 990.

... el conde don Sancho non pudiendo soffrir el tuerto que los moros le fizieran en matarle su padre, llamo los leoneses et los nauarros por la postura que ouieran fecha con su padre de ayudarse unos a otros ...<sup>43</sup>

[... the Count don Sancho, who could not suffer the offence by the Muslims who had killed his father, summoned his allied from León and Navarre in the name of the pact that they had signed with his father, according to which they had to help each other ...]

Significantly, the pattern of inheritance outlined above is not only peculiar to friendship, but it also adjusts to the transmission of enmity, as suggested in *EE* 714. The story refers to the imprisonment of King Sancho I of Navarre (r.905–25) – whom the chronicler erroneously calls García – by Count Fernán González. The King was detained until his subjects demanded his freedom. Fernán González responded by mercifully freeing the King, who returned to his dominions in Navarre and from there he proclaimed:

... ‘amigos, uos sabedes como yo so desonrrado del conde Fernand Gonçalez, et la mi desondra uestra es; et bien sepades que o yo sere del uengado, o y porne el cuerpo.’<sup>44</sup>

[... ‘my friends, you know how I have been dishonoured by Count Fernán González, and my dishonour is your own dishonour; and you well know that I will either take my revenge on him, or leave my [dead] body there.’]

Similar dynamics of inheritance of friendships and enmities were also quite common in medieval Central Europe.<sup>45</sup>

Nonetheless, some of the events concerning Alfonso X’s life and politics seem to gainsay such a principle of inheritance in practice. For instance, after receiving Écija from his father, the King donated it to his friend and military supporter Nuño González de Lara, who later became one of Alfonso X’s favourites. What is noteworthy is that the Lara family, supporters of Alfonso IX of León

<sup>43</sup> *EE* 765.

<sup>44</sup> *EE* 714.

<sup>45</sup> Gerd Althoff, ‘*Amicitiae* [Friendships] as Relationships Between States and People’, in *Debating the Middle Ages: Issues and Readings*, ed. Lester K. Little and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 191–210, at p. 193.

(r.1188–1230), were Ferdinand III's enemies since the beginning of his reign.<sup>46</sup> This intriguing episode poses new questions, such as how friendship could be re-established between former enemies and, in those cases, how it could even turn into an official statement of peace. This calls to mind one of the Alfonsine laws according to which conflicts and wars were indispensable instruments that, if well managed, would guide people to civil peace, since '... [guerra] aduce despues paz, de que viene asosegamiento, et folgura et amistad ...'<sup>47</sup> The same law explains what reasons might generate conflicts: first, the contentions which might arise between co-existent powers when one of them threatened the position of the other; second, the need of joining forces against foreigner invaders. In both cases war was the necessary premise without which no steady peace could be achieved. On a smaller scale, this could be also applied to personal frictions and animosities, which could pave the way to later reconciliations and durable agreements.

The theoretical justification for such shifts from open enmity to pragmatic alliances, as suggested by the law, in reality allowed space for broader personal and political manoeuvres. Even though certain models of inheritance of friendship and enmity applied exclusively to those cases in which the parties shared the same goodwill, admittedly, such a pattern was not unbreakable, since external factors could undermine and radically transform pre-existing alliances.

### Unequal Friendships: The Case of Vassalic Relationships

The medieval reinterpretation of the classical concept of equality, as well as the connection between friendship and social hierarchy, are two key points to examine. A number of pacts signed between unequal parties resembled, and in some cases coincided with, ritualized fiefs, vassalic oaths and contractual links, which according to some scholars were the structural pillars around which medieval feudal society was built.<sup>48</sup> In the early Middle Ages, for instance, the

<sup>46</sup> Simon R. Doubleday, *The Lara Family: Crown and Nobility in Medieval Spain* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>47</sup> ... [war] afterwards brings peace, from which result serenity, rest and friendship ... SP II:XXIII.

<sup>48</sup> Numerous scholars have debated the various aspects of 'feudalism', the definition of which has been gainsaid and rejected several times, considered by many a late seventeenth-century label, too simplistically adapted to define a broad range of social, political and economic relationships experienced during the Middle Ages in Europe. For an introduction see: Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L.A. Manyon, 2nd edn (2 vols, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965); Marc Bloch, 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes', *Revue de synthèse historique*, 46 (1928): pp. 15–50, trans. as 'A Contribution Towards a

Carolingian kings established bonds of amity with other secular lords and with the Popes exclusively since: 'just as a treaty of friendship between two rulers excluded the payment of tribute, so too a subordinate relationship excluded *amicitia*'.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, a breakthrough was experienced in the ninth century when, due to the crisis of the Carolingian Empire, bonds of comradeship and treaties of friendships began to involve members of lower social ranks. For the first time subjects were directly involved in making agreements, although they acted as public witnesses of the pacts which their lords signed publicly rather than as official contractors themselves. After two centuries, however, this picture was modified completely: what in the ninth century had been regarded as innovative, became a consolidated norm from the twelfth century, when friendships signed by kings also included bishops, nobles and magnates, who had to behave according to the written provisions established by those pacts.

Exceptionally, in the Iberian Peninsula the social networks involving the sovereigns evolved differently than in the rest of Europe.<sup>50</sup> The kingdoms of León, Castile, Navarre and Aragon (while Catalonia experienced a completely different process), together with other Mediterranean areas, only adopted some of the feudal institutions.<sup>51</sup> Hilda Grassotti demonstrated that the relationships

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Comparative History of European Societies', in *Land and Work in Medieval Europe*, ed. M. Bloch, trans. J.E. Anderson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 44–81. See also Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Guy Bois, *The Transformation of the Year One Thousand: The Village of Lournand from Antiquity to Feudalism*, trans. J. Birrell (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Jean-Pierre Poly and Eric Bournazel, *The Feudal Transformation, 900–1200* (New York and London: Holmes & Meier, 1991); Elizabeth A.R. Brown, 'The Tyranny of Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe', *American Historical Review*, 79 (1974): pp. 1063–88; François-Luis Ganshof, *Feudalism*, trans. Philip Grierson, 3rd edn (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964).

<sup>49</sup> Althoff, 'Friendship between States and People', p. 196.

<sup>50</sup> Juan Ignacio Ruiz de la Peña, 'Feudalismo(s)', in *Tópicos y realidades de La Edad Media*, ed. E. Benito Ruano, (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2002), pp. 105–56, at pp. 91–118.

<sup>51</sup> *Los orígenes del feudalismo en el mundo mediterráneo*, ed. A. Malpica and T. Quesada, 2nd edn (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1998); Joseph Maria Salrach, 'Les féodalités méridionales: des Alpes à la Galice', in *Les féodalités*, ed. Eric Bournazel and Jean-Pierre Poly, (Paris: P.U.F, 1998), pp. 313–88; Pierre Toubert, 'Les féodalités méditerranéennes: un problème d'histoire comparée', in *Les structures sociales de l'Aquitaine, du Languedoc et de l'Espagne au premier âge féodal: Toulouse 28–31 Mars 1968*, ed. Philippe Wolff (Paris: CNRS, 1969), pp. 1–15. On the specific case of the Iberian Peninsula: Jose A. García de Cortázar, 'Espacio, sociedad y organización medievales en nuestra tradición historiográfica', in *Organización social del espacio en la España medieval: la corona de Castilla en los siglos VIII a XV*, ed. J.A. García de Cortázar (Barcelona: Ariel, 1985), pp. 11–40; Abilio Barbero and

between the Iberian monarchs and the individuals to whom they granted lands in *propriedad plena* (full property) were links which transcended the most common rules of vassalage.<sup>52</sup>

If defining the peculiarities of each agreement and the differences between them has always been an extremely complicated task, the duty of making war and peace, either with or against the lords to whom the contractors were linked, represented the only incontestable feature. In fact, as far as obligations of defence and mutual support were concerned, the Iberian vassalic connections did not differ from those experienced in other European areas.<sup>53</sup> A further attempt at clarification was made by Mattoso, who remarked upon the difference between the legal stipulations of such vassalic oaths and the voluntary informal acts of submission that subjects paid to a powerful lord in order to obtain his protection. Mattoso also argued that, despite its lack of a clear and coherent structure, the Iberian feudal system had a strong influence on daily matters.<sup>54</sup> The model of vassalic relationships was founded on mutual help, loyalty, protection and defence of honour, which were the same structural characteristics of friendship. Semantic coincidences between the lexicon used to define feudal connections and *amicitia* add elements to support this argument. However, I would disagree with Mattoso's idea that feudal links operated as models for other social

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Marcelo Vigil, *La formación del feudalismo en la Península Ibérica* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1978); Hilda Grassotti, *Las instituciones feudo-vasalláticas en León y Castilla* (2 vols, Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1969); Luis García de Valdeavellano, 'Las instituciones feudales en España', in appendix to the Spanish translation of Ganshof, *El Feudalismo*, trans. F. Famosa (Barcelona: Ariel, 1963), and reprinted as *El feudalismo hispánico y otros estudios de historia medieval* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1981), pp. 63–162; Valdeavellano, 'Sobre la cuestión del feudalismo hispánico', in *El feudalismo hispánico*, pp. 7–62. Similarities between the Spanish and the European systems are highlighted in Barbero and Vigil, *La formación del feudalismo en la Península Ibérica*; Reyna Pastor de Togneri, *Resistencias y luchas campesinas en la época del crecimiento y consolidación de la formación feudal Castilla y León siglos X-XIII* (Madrid: Siglo Veintiuno de España, 1980).

<sup>52</sup> Hilda Grassotti, 'Pro Bono et Fideli Servitio', *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, 33–34 (1961): pp. 5–55. She pointed out the existence of some royal donations to women, Jews, churchmen and entire communities – such as cities and councils – which were not regarded as regular vassals.

<sup>53</sup> José A. Maravall, 'Del regimen feudal al regimen corporativo en el pensamiento de Alfonso X', *Boletín de la Real Academia Española*, 157 (1965): pp. 213–68.

<sup>54</sup> José Mattoso, 'La difusión de la mentalidad vasallática en el lenguaje cotidiano', *Studia Historica*, 4 (1986): pp. 171–84, at p. 172.



connections, including friendship; and I would rather argue that the latter was frequently regarded as the seed from which other social bonds would flourish.<sup>55</sup>

Friendships involving individuals belonging to unequal social ranks, despite their potential equality in virtues, implied certain disparity, which inevitably led the lower contractors to behave reverentially and subordinately. Not only were these subjects obliged to provide good advice and moral teaching to their lords, but also to intervene in their physical defence and protection whenever it was necessary. Moreover, even those who were vassals of the king's friends were themselves tied to the monarch and, as such, they were contractually and morally obliged to support him. As beneficial as this might appear, alliances with royal figures could, in some cases, prove extremely dangerous and lead to dramatic consequences. A remarkable case concerns the events which followed the murder of Infant García, operated by the treacherous Vela family, who planned to take revenge for the dishonour that the prince's father, Sancho III of Navarre (r.1004–35), had inflicted on them by exiling the entire dynasty from Castile. The legend, which already appeared in Lucas de Tuy's chronicle, tells that the 13-year-old prince was assassinated by his godfather Roy Vela.<sup>56</sup> After him, his loyal vassals and friends were exposed to the same tragic consequences:

... et pues que ellos ouieron muerto ell infante, metieron mano por los otros que eran uassallos et amigos dell infante, et mataron y muchos dellos tambien de los castellanos como de los leoneses que uinien y en acorro ...<sup>57</sup>

[... and once they killed the infant, they started doing the same with those who were his vassals and friends, and they killed many of them, including the Castilian and Leonese people who went there to help him ...]

From a linguistic perspective, the lower we descend the social ladder, the less often the title of *amigo* appears to address the higher figures, and it is replaced, instead, by *señor* (lord). Contrarily, the highest figures continued to use this amicable appellation to address their subordinates as a means of *captatio benevolentiae*.

<sup>55</sup> Duby also considered vassalic bonds as subsequent and derived from other pre-existing social patterns, and particularly from family and amicable relationships. Georges Duby, *La société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâçonnaise* (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N, 1953, repr. 1971), pp. 94–116, 140–41, 172, 177–85, 194–95, 185, 193, 291 (reprint at pp. 93–108, 124–25, 149, 153–58, 164–65, also 158–64, 235–36).

<sup>56</sup> *Versión crítica de la 'Estoria de España': estudio y edición desde Pelayo hasta Ordoño II*, ed. I. Fernández-Ordóñez (Madrid: Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal, 1993), p. 96.

<sup>57</sup> EE 788.

The description of the internecine rivalry between the two brothers, Sancho II of León (r.1065–72) and García of Galicia (r.1065–71) serves here as a case in point. Before their armies clashed on open battlefield, King García incited his host by addressing them with the following words:

... ‘uassallos et amigos, vos uedes el grand tuerto que el rey don Sancho mio hermano me faze en quererme tollir la tierra que mio padre me dio, et ruegouos que uos pese et que me ayudedes, ca uos sabedes que desde yo fuy rey, que quanto oue todo uos lo di et lo parti conuusco, auer, cauallos, armas; et guardeuos pora tal sazón et pora tal día como este’.<sup>58</sup>

[... ‘vassals and friends, you can see the evil that King Sancho, my brother, is doing by trying to expropriate me of the land that my father gave me, and I pray you to come and help me, as you know that since I was King, I gave you all that I had and I shared my possessions with you: wealth, horses, weapons; and I relied on you for when a period and a moment like this would come’.]

The King declared openly that his generosity towards his friends and vassals was not offered out of pure love, but it was rather motivated by pragmatic interests. He also summoned his host, relying on the certainty that they would intervene on his behalf for the benefits (wealth, lands and weapons) that they had received as an anticipated reward for it.<sup>59</sup>

Reconsidering what was described before as a system of inheritance of friendship, it is evident that it did not apply consistently to this vassalic pattern, according to which alliances were not transferred automatically from father to son, but they were rather agreed voluntarily. Not surprisingly, there were some exceptions, such as those cases in which heirs enshrined the same virtues as their ancestors. Only in those circumstances, could the agreement be preserved or renewed. The narration of how the virtuous Sancho III of Castile (r.1157–58) accessed the throne after his father, Alfonso VII (r.1126–57), and managed to keep his ancestor’s friendships is a revealing instance of this:

... et fue a demandar al rey don García de Nauarra, su suegro, et al rey don Alffonso dAragon quel conosçiesen el vassallage que conosçieran a su padre ell emperador don Alffonso et gele guardaran.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> EE 822.

<sup>59</sup> EE 822.

<sup>60</sup> EE 985.

[... and he went to ask King García of Navarre, his father-in-law, and King Alfonso of Aragon to confirm and preserve the fief of vassalage that they had awarded to his father, the Emperor don Alfonso.]

Significantly, the fact that individuals pledged an oath through which they declared to be *naturales vassallos* (natural vassals) of their lords neither implied that their relationship would necessarily last nor that it was necessarily advantageous. In fact, if the king did not behave as a righteous lord such coalitions would easily dissolve.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, in the establishment of those bonds, mutual favours, loyalty and righteous rewards were one part of the equation, but so too was the fear that the subjects felt for their own conditions if they rebelled or did not respect the established rules. The alliances signed between sovereigns and entire communities, as well as those established with the *Cortes*, are significant examples.<sup>62</sup> CSM 386 reports the events concerning the great council that Alfonso X summoned in Seville, which in all likelihood mirrored the *Cortes* held there in 1281. All the representatives of the towns convened by the sovereign attended the assembly, although they probably did it out of fear rather than of their own volition.<sup>63</sup>

It is worth pointing out that the fact that juridical and official documents describe in more detail vertical power-based relationships does not exclude the possibility that similarly powerful horizontal links might have been established, perhaps through customary practices. Susan Reynolds argued that forms of solidarity at horizontal level, forged on the basis on non-verbal agreements, occurred within villages, communities and guilds all around Europe already from the tenth century. Moreover:

... lay society and government depended in a mass of different ways on the collective activities of a wide range of people; that this activity was undertaken as a matter of course in support of government, as well as in opposition to it; and that in all its aspects it reveals a very homogeneous set of values, which combined

<sup>61</sup> CSM 281. Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers and Overlapping Cultural Borders: The Power of Personal and Political Exchanges in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile (1252–1284)', *Al-Masāq*, 23: 3 (2011): pp. 217–36.

<sup>62</sup> Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X, the Cortes, and Government in Medieval Spain* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1998); Evelyn Procter, *Curia and Cortes in León and Castile, 1072–1295* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

<sup>63</sup> Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Alfonso X and the Cantigas de Santa María: A Poetic Biography* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 170.

acceptance of inequality and subordination with a high degree of voluntary cooperation.<sup>64</sup>

Iberia must not have differed radically from this model. Explicit reference or glimpses of this are detectable, for instance, in the Alfonsine literary production, in which even the semantics of friendship suggests such orientation. The scope of the Alfonsine scriptorium was to attempt a morally acceptable depiction of what were in fact extremely pragmatic and opportunistic agreements. Nonetheless, even though they were presented as instances of friendship, the possibility of experiencing corruption and difficulties was never denied; particularly so in cases of relationships established between people of unequal natures and ranks.

### Gestures and Rituals: The Symbolic Value of Marriage

Solemnity and rituality characterized the making of most of those agreements. Political alliances were generally encompassed publicly and their terms and conditions were stipulated in front of witnesses who were summoned to testify their validity. Secular and religious symbolism intermingled when an alliance was legitimized by the adoption of elements that appealed to a shared religious background between contractors and witnesses.<sup>65</sup> The law prescribed specific gestures concerning the act of subordination through which the subjects had to swear their vassalic submission and loyalty to their lords ‘... besándole el pie et la mano en conoscimiento de señorio, ó faziéndole otra humildat segunt costumbre de la tierra ...’<sup>66</sup> Moreover, since the promise had been made in the name of God and in respect of the Christian faith, it appeared as divinely ordained and therefore even more praiseworthy.

<sup>64</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900–1300* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 332.

<sup>65</sup> Althoff, ‘*Amicitiae* [Friendships]’, pp. 191–210; G. Althoff, ‘The Variability of Rituals in the Middle Ages’, in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. G. Althoff, J. Fried and Patrick J. Geary, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Washington, DC: German Historical Institute, 2002), pp. 71–88; Sergio Bertelli, *The King’s Body: Sacred Rituals of Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, trans. R. Burr Litchfield (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), pp. 10–34. About the formulation of agreements of peace see also the chapter ‘The Making of the Treaty of Paris (1259) and the Royal Style’ in Pierre Chaplais, *Essays in Medieval Diplomacy and Administration* (London: Hambledon Press, 1981), pp. 235–53.

<sup>66</sup> ... by kissing his foot and hand, in recognition of sovereignty, and by showing their humility in other ways according to the custom of the country ... *SP II: XIII: XX*.

No less important than fiefs, oaths of vassalage and donations, was the role played by marriage, which usually contributed to reinforce political alliances. As sanctioned in *SP IV*, a marital bond was simultaneously an institutional, social and spiritual link, which tightened the partners together through love and loyalty. It cannot be denied, however, that there were pragmatic and material interests – which involved dowry, benefits claimed by inheritance and material profits – which played a key role in most marital arrangements. By tracing the evolution of the history of marriage it is possible to demonstrate how, during the Middle Ages, it was recurrently and customarily used as one of the most efficacious instruments to bolster an alliance between two families, dynasties and even kingdoms, as well as to guarantee legitimate succession, to gain military support, to forge international alliances and to improve diplomatic and commercial relationships with foreign powers.<sup>67</sup> This is what King Pelagius (r.718–37), for example, did when he gave his daughter, Esmeralda, in marriage to Pedro of Cantabria (d.730), as a reward for the help that the duke had offered him during the campaigns against the Muslims (*EE* 575).

Marital agreements were also powerful tools to re-establish alliances which had been destroyed by contentions and rivalries. A case in point was the delicate situation between Sancho III of Navarre (r.1004–35) and Bermudo III (r.1027–37), whose *desamor* (aversion) was inflamed by the fact that Sancho III had been accused of stealing part of the dominions of León, which legitimately belonged to Bermudo. Downhearted by continuous conflicts and tensions, Bermudo's wise counsellors advised him to give his daughter Sancha in wife to don Fernando, King Sancho's son. The wedding was regarded as a powerful instrument to vouchsafe peace and establish future agreements; for

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<sup>67</sup> David D'Avray, *Medieval Marriage: Symbolism and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Christopher N.L. Brooke, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). An interesting reading for a comparison with the discipline of marriage as recorded by the English legal sources is Conor McCarthy, *Love, Sex and Marriage in the Middle Ages: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 93–128. See also *Love, Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages: A Reader*, ed. J. Murray (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2001); Georges Duby, *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Dunnett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 1–21 and 105–112. More specifically on Iberia: Patricia T. Ramos Anderson, *Las Siete Partidas, Título II, 'De los casamientos' de Alfonso X, el Sabio: Edición crítica y exposición analítica* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010); *Marriage and Sexuality in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia*, ed. M.E. Lacarra Lanz (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 1–58; Marilyn Stone, *Marriage and Friendship in Medieval Spain: Social Relations According to the Fourth Partida of Alfonso X* (New York: Peter Lang, 1990).

this reason it was defined ‘... carrera de paz et de amor por aqui entrel et el rey don Sancho de Castiella’<sup>68</sup>

Wise counsellors participated actively in planning those unions, as for the wedding between Alfonso VIII of Castile and Berenguela (Berengaria), Alfonso IX of León’s daughter.<sup>69</sup> As emphasized in *EE* 1004, marriage represented the wisest solution to solve the ongoing disputes between these two kingdoms. Marriages of this sort had the potential to turn ancestral enmities into pacific relationships, which in time could even assume the connotations of more personal friendships. The description of Alfonso IX of León given in the same chapter of the *EE* supports this point:

... estonçes enemigo, maguer que parient, mas ya agora so yerno et amigo ...  
Et la paç firmada entrellos como entre padre et fijo, quedaron las guerras et los  
destroymientos entrellos et sus yentes et sus regnos por algunos dias.<sup>70</sup>

[... once enemy, as well as relative, but now he is his son-in-law and his friend ...  
And the peace signed between them resembled one between father and son; war  
and destruction ceased between them, between their people and their reigns for  
some days.]

The extent to which those relationships defined as political friendships harmonize with the general rules and parameters of *amicitia* is debateable, since most of them were strictly dependent on pragmatic interests. Nonetheless, the involved parties voluntarily adopted and promoted conventional gestures and rituals, which would contribute to ennoble those opportunistic bonds in the eyes of both the contractors and those who witnessed their establishment. The solid bases of most of those agreements were trust generated by time, routine, reputation and memory. Barbara Misztal’s sociological approach, although applied to modern contexts, is particularly stimulating when combined with historical analysis.<sup>71</sup> In fact, in the Middle Ages like today, contacts of different types, whether officially signed or informally agreed, served to simplify social interaction whilst recognizing the existing boundaries between individuals, groups and communities. Trust in particular – and therefore friendships based

<sup>68</sup> ... a peaceful and amicable route between him and King Sancho of Castile from that moment onward. *EE* 800.

<sup>69</sup> *EE* 997.

<sup>70</sup> *EE* 1004.

<sup>71</sup> Barbara A. Misztal, *Trust in Modern Societies: The Search for the Bases of Social Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), p. 102.

on it – reflected the *habita* of distinct societies, while showing elements of continuity and preservation of memory through the legacy of the past. This is a call for further research, which historians should join in order to capture and frame such an intriguing, but still hazy, picture of all the intertwined threads which tied medieval social networks of different types together.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Geoffrey Hosking, 'Trust and Distrust: A Suitable Theme for Historians?', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 16 (2006): pp. 95–115.



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## Chapter 5

# Pragmatic Alliances and Interfaith Relationships

### Beyond Devotional Labels

To what extent did the multicultural environment of thirteenth-century Iberia affect definitions and practices of friendship? Did religious and ethnic boundaries constrain the establishment of personal and political collaborations? Religious beliefs and ethnic affiliation were in some cases subordinate to social stratification and group distinctions. Moreover, political arrangements and daily practices did not always coincide with legal and moral restrictions.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, once the process of Christian expansion had reached its nadir, most of the Muslim rulers of al-Andalus had to swear vassalic oaths and pay tributes to the Christian monarchs, while the latter would benefit from their military services either against other Muslim rulers or against their Christian competitors fighting for the control of the Iberian territories. Not surprisingly, several chapters from the *EE* describe the contingencies, as well as the personal and political reasons, which prompted Christian lords to befriend the Muslims.<sup>1</sup> In numerous cases, the creation and maintenance of bonds of political and military friendships with the infidels overstepped the moral rules that any good Christian, as a friend of God, should respect and for this reason those signing such agreements were inevitably punished.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the historical accounts presented in the Alfonsine chronicles echoed the idea of a strict correlation between personal interests and immoral agreements signed with those who were openly recognized as enemies of the Christian faith. An instance of this is the story of Bernardo del Carpio, a knight who had fought

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<sup>1</sup> See the case of Silo, King of Asturias, as recounted in *EE* 603, which I discussed in my article 'Religious Frontiers and Overlapping Cultural Borders: The Power of Personal and Political Exchanges in the Works of Alfonso X of Castile (1252–1284)', *Al-Masāq*, 23: 3 (2011): pp. 217–36, at pp. 221–22.

<sup>2</sup> *EE* 605, about Mauregatus, is a case in point. See Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', pp. 221–22.

alongside Alfonso III 'el Magno' (r.866–910) in all his campaigns against the Muslims, but in the end:

... puso su amiztat con los moros quel ayudassen, et que daquel castiello guerrearie ell al rey don Alffonso et correrle ye toda la tierra.<sup>3</sup>

[... he made friends with the Muslims in order to be helped by them, and from that castle he would fight King Alfonso and invade his lands.]

This alliance was signed to fulfil a personal task: rescuing Bernardo's father from the confinement imposed upon him by Alfonso III.

Personal motivations were one part of the equation, but so too were conspiracies against the Christian lords and political manoeuvres agreed with the Muslims in order to gain material benefits, fame and recognition of power and authority. The treachery supposedly committed by Roy Blasquez against his nephews, the *siete infantes de Lara*, recounted also in *EE* 738, is one example.<sup>4</sup> Treachery was regarded as the worst sin that anybody, of any religion and ethnic origins, might commit. Ergo, a traitor was considered much more dangerous and deceitful than a mere religious dissenter, as a Muslim could be. Moreover, alliances signed with the Muslims frequently led to open enmities with other Christian rulers. An example is the coalition between Alfonso VI (r.1065–1109) and the Muslim ruler of Toledo, al-Mamún (r.1043–75), as narrated in *EE* 827. One day, the two kings, already in peace, were riding alongside the river Tajuña. Two of the Muslim knights, who were among al-Mamún's retinue, while having a private conversation, expressed their thoughts about Alfonso VI and one of them told the other of his dream, in which he saw the Christian monarch entering Toledo as its ruler triumphantly. While they were pronouncing these words, simultaneously Alfonso's hair stood on end and there was no way to press it down again. The Muslim king interviewed the two squires and, having a full picture of what had happened, he was convinced by his counsellors to interpret those facts as an unmistakable sign of the events to come. The counsellors suggested that al-Mamún should not hesitate to kill the Castilian lord, but the wise ruler refused to follow their malevolent advice. Behind his decision there were two principal motivations: first, he did not want to break the existing pact of amity by betraying his ally's trust; a second, far less noble and more pragmatic reason, was that he would obtain more benefits from a peaceful agreement with

<sup>3</sup> *EE* 654.

<sup>4</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', p. 224.

the Castilian monarch rather than by killing him and making enemies with his people:

Estonces el rey Almemon dixo que en la su fe et en la su lealtat uiuie ell alli, et que lo non farie; mas que se seruirie dell en guisa quel non uiniesse ende daño, et demas quel non querie crebantar la yura que auie fecha, lo uno por quel amaua muy de coraçon, lo al por quel auie fecho muy grand seruicio en batallas que fiziera contra sus enemigos et los venciera yl defendie el regno.<sup>5</sup>

[Then King al-Mamún declared that he was living there faithfully and loyally, and that he would not do it; but that he would rather serve him so that he would not come to any harm, and moreover he did not want to break the oath that he had pledged, on the one hand because he loved him sincerely, on the other hand because he had served him in battle very loyally against his enemies, and thanks to him he had won and defended his kingdom.]

In the name of mutuality, al-Mamún also asked Alfonso VI to swear loyalty to his family and to his closest friends, as well as to respect the terms of their pact, at least while both of them were alive. The King of Castile agreed and their peace was confirmed:

El rey don Alffonso, con la sana lealtat que tenie en coraçon, yurogelo, et prometiol demas que yrie con el contra todos los omnes del mundo que contra el fuessen. El daquela ora adelante fue el rey don Alffonso mas su priuado del rey Almemon et mas su amigo.<sup>6</sup>

[King Alfonso, with the honest loyalty that he had in his heart, swore it to him, and he promised that he would join him against all the men in the world that would become his enemies. And hereby, King Alfonso was one of al-Mamún's closest counsellors and friends.]

The narration of the *EE* – endowed with abundant fictional details – is significant when compared with the much more laconic description given in Lucas de Tuy's *Chronicon mundi*, in which this episode also appears:

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<sup>5</sup> *EE* 827.

<sup>6</sup> *EE* 827.

Jura ut Adefonsus et quod pascebat barbarus se facturus promisit, et etiam contra omnes hostes eius promisit omnimodum auxilium et obsequium prestaturum et ex hoc factus est Amenon et Adefonso familiarior et ipsum tenerrime diligebat.<sup>7</sup>

[Alfonso swore to the Muslim that he would intervene, and he promised that he would help him against all his enemies in any possible way, and that he would respect him. Since then, Alfonso became al-Mamún's friend and he appreciated him heartily.]

Such a comparative analysis shows that whilst the concept of personal collaboration between sovereigns already existed in the Tudense's version, a more nuanced terminology of friendship (different from *familiarior*) was instead introduced in the Alfonsine re-elaboration. Moreover, according to the Alfonsine chronicle, both the stability and resistance of the agreement between the two rulers were proved by the events to come, as one can read in *EE* 840, which describes the situation after Sancho II's death in 1072. The legitimate heir to the crown of León was meant to be his brother Alfonso VI, who had been exiled by Sancho, but supported by his sister Urraca. As guardian of his honour and power, Urraca forbade that al-Mamún should come to know about Sancho's death, since she did not trust the Muslim ruler and she feared that revealing such news would prove dangerous for Alfonso VI. Undoubtedly, such important events could not be silenced and the awareness of it made Alfonso VI hesitate about the behaviour that he should adopt towards al-Mamún. Would it have been better for him to reveal the truth or to hide the event, taking the risk of being accused of treachery, while their alliance would have inevitably turned into open enmity? Despite all the contradictory advice received from his counsellors, Alfonso VI chose to behave honestly, in the name of the respect and aid that the other had always showed to him. His move was successful and al-Mamún, thankful for his ally's loyalty, agreed to renew their pact of friendship:

Et desi fizo Almemon al rey don Alffonso renouar la yura quel fiziera antes de segurança por ell et por sus fijos, et aun si mester le fuesse quel ayudarie contra

<sup>7</sup> Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, MS 10442 ([n. p.]: [n. pub.], c. XVII), f. 149 (r) and 150 (f). The oldest surviving manuscript is MS 2248, Biblioteca Universidad, Salamanca. See also MS 20, Real Colegiata de San Isidoro, León. For a recent edition: *Chronicon mundi*, ed. Emma Falque Rey, in *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis*, LXXIV (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003).

los otros moros. Et cuenta la estoria que otra tal yura fizo Almemon al rey don Alffonso ... Et espidieronse alli ell uno dell otro con grand amor ...<sup>8</sup>

[And so King al-Mamún made King Alfonso renew his oath of security for him and for his sons, and he also made him promise that he should help the other against other Muslim forces. And the chronicle reports that the same oath was pledged by al-Mamún to King Alfonso ... And they parted there from each other with signs of great love ...]

The agreement was solid and it was still valid a few years later, when the King of Córdoba attacked al-Mamún. In accordance with the Tudense's version,<sup>9</sup> the *EE* narrates that al-Mamún hesitated and sent messengers to remind the terms of the agreement to the Castilian king, Alfonso VI, in order to check whether the other was intervening with peaceful intentions:

Almemon quando lo oyo, non sabiendo en que razon lo fazie el rey don Alffonso, ouo miedo que uinie contra el, et enuiol dezir por sus mandaderos que se acordasse dell amor quel el mostrara et de la onrra quel fiziera et de la postura que auie con ell, et que rogaua que ouiesse paz entrellos.<sup>10</sup>

[When al-Mamún heard it, since he did not know for what reason King Alfonso was doing it, feared that he was coming against him, and sent some of his messengers to remind him of the love they had between them, the honour and the promise that he had signed with him, and he begged him to keep peace between them.]

The uncertainty and doubts which assaulted al-Mamún before trusting his Christian ally bear witness to the fact that such volte-faces were neither impossible nor rare. Evidently, the Alfonsine chroniclers adapted those events to the exemplary paradigm that they aspired to set. By contrast, according to the *Historia Silense*, distrust and scepticism characterized the relationship between Alfonso VI and al-Mamún after Sancho's assassination. Unlike the *EE*, in the *Historia Silense* the finger of guilt is pointed at the Christian monarch who, greedy for power, decided to occult those matters to his Muslim ally, making the latter highly suspicious.<sup>11</sup> Despite the differences between the surviving

<sup>8</sup> *EE* 840.

<sup>9</sup> Lucas de Tuy, *Chronicon mundi*, f.158 (r).

<sup>10</sup> *EE* 848.

<sup>11</sup> For an English translation of the *Historia Silense*, *The World of El Cid*, ed. Simon Barton and Richard Fletcher (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 9–64, at p. 33.

historical accounts of this episode, in none of them the types of friendships established under the pressure of particular threats are presented as unbreakable; by contrast, they were likely to evolve and change radically.

Clearly, the descriptions of interfaith relationships provided by the Alfonsine works were masterfully shaped to fit the sovereign's political and moral agenda. Most of the territories once part of al-Andalus were 'reconquered' even before Alfonso X came to power, but he now had to face the complex task of promoting the Christian repopulation of those areas, while guaranteeing that their resources, produce and revenues were made available to the Castilian crown. Despite the fact that most of the Muslim rulers, including those of the recently conquered *taifa* kingdoms of Niebla (1262) and Murcia (1266), swore their loyalty to the Christian monarch, the situation remained unstable. As the *Anonymous Chronicle of Sabagún* suggests, Alfonso X was worried about the actions of both the Moabites and Moorish kings, whom he still perceived as potential threats despite their official submission as his vassals.<sup>12</sup>

The CSM provide a valuable insight into this complex scenario. For instance, CSM 185 is imbued with references to the agreement between Alfonso X and the King of Granada, Ibn al-Ahmar (r.1237–73).<sup>13</sup> Whether their relationship was influenced and shaped by religious prejudices, or there was rather a prevailing awareness of the military strategies that the Muslims would put in place to rebel against the Christian leaders or to betray them, is impossible to argue with certainty. However, mistrust seemed to be mutual and it was not easily wiped out by the fact that the two leaders had signed an official agreement.

Moreover, during the reign of Alfonso X both Muslims and Jews were entitled to certain protection under the law and they were neither forced nor encouraged to convert. More than a magnanimous act of tolerance and enlightenment, this had obvious fiscal and material benefits for the royal coffers. In fact, non-Christians had to pay taxes from which, otherwise, they would have been exempted.<sup>14</sup> Even though it is clear that it was not merely and simply a matter of religious beliefs, devotional categorizations continued to be exploited, at least rhetorically, as powerful tools of political propaganda, as for the anti-Muslim alliance agreed between Pedro II of Aragon (r.1196–1213) and Alfonso VIII

<sup>12</sup> *Crónicas anónimas de Sabagún*, ed. Antonio Ubieto Arteta (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1987), ch. 87, p. 153. See also *Crónica de Alfonso X: según el Ms. II/2777 de la Biblioteca del Palacio Real, Madrid*, ed. Manuel González Jiménez (Murcia: Real Academia Alfonso X el Sabio, 1999), ch. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', pp. 226–27.

<sup>14</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', pp. 225–28.



of Castile (r.1158–1214).<sup>15</sup> Friendships in the name of a common faith were also strengthened either for defensive or offensive purposes, as recounted in *EE* 692, in which King Ramiro II of León (r.931–51), together with Fernán González, went against the emir of Saragossa, who had rebelled against the former. However, despite the success of this military operation, the Muslim leader betrayed them by pledging an oath of vassalage to the Caliph of Córdoba.<sup>16</sup>

There is evidence to suggest that political friendships against Muslim enemies were extremely common during Alfonso X's reign.<sup>17</sup> Nonetheless, some of those agreements signed with the representatives of a different faith were regarded as beneficial if they were built on the moral basis traditionally associated with friendship. Undeniably, religious beliefs and ethic boundaries were the catalysts of either individual or collective struggles; however, other intra-communal factors contributed to exacerbate those underlying tensions. What is particularly interesting is that, despite the extremely pragmatic and strategic goals lying behind interfaith agreements of both political and military types, in the Alfonsine works they were still defined through the vocabulary and formulae of friendship.

### Christian and Muslim Elites: The King as a Friend and the Friends of the King

Among the individuals involved in a political relationship, the king was the principal signatory, around whom numerous alliances were established. *SP* II:I:IX discusses kingship and describes the way in which, on the one hand, both kings and emperors should behave towards God, their families, their courts and their subjects.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the same law prescribes how all the aforementioned categories should mutually accomplish the same duties towards their sovereign, since God had chosen him as a secular intermediary to rule on His behalf.<sup>19</sup> But juridical admonitions did not always coincide with practice and

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<sup>15</sup> *EE* 797.

<sup>16</sup> *EE* 692. See also *EE* 705.

<sup>17</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', p. 227.

<sup>18</sup> Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'The King as Subject, Master and Model of Authority: The Case of Alfonso X of Castile', in *'Every Inch a King': Comparative Studies on Kings and Kingship in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, ed. Lynette Mitchell and Charles Melville (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 269–84, at pp. 274–75.

<sup>19</sup> *SP* II:I:III.

those in power frequently adopted formulae of *captatio benevolentiae* to address their followers, seeking unconditioned benevolence in return.<sup>20</sup>

The commandments of the law leave no doubt about the attitudes that monarchs should adopt towards their subjects, since they were individuals who deserved to be treated according to their personal and social merits, as well as according to the types of relationships that they enjoyed with their sovereign. These legal impositions are also echoed in the chronicles, as one can read in *EE* 192 in which Emperor Trajan (d.117 AD) is described as follows:

... e fue Traiano muy franque et muy compannon a sus amigos, et amo mucho los caualleros, et fue muy manso contra los cibdadanos, et muy franque en soltar los pechos a las cibdades ...<sup>21</sup>

[... Trajan was very liberal and a good companion of his friends, and he deeply loved his knights, and he was very merciful with his citizens, and very honest in collecting tributes from the cities ...]

The Alfonsine scribes made Trajan's deeds fit the prototype envisaged by their patron, according to which a ruler should first set a model of behaviour; second, he should not take his people's allegiance for granted, but he should rather put all his effort into obtaining their benevolence:

... cuentan del las estorias que por que era tan bueno et tan mesurado et tan compannero de los omnes, et los affazie tan mucho assi, quel preguntaron un dia sus priuados et sus amigos por que lo fazie; et el dixoles que tal emperador querie el seer a los que no auien dignidades ni sennorios, quales solie el querer, al tiempo que las no auie, quel fuessen los otros emperadores.<sup>22</sup>

[... as it is narrated, since he was a good and balanced man, and a good friend of all men, and many considered him as such, one day his counsellors and friends asked him why he behaved as such; and he replied that he wanted to be a good emperor for those who had neither a status nor a lord, as he wished other emperors would have behaved in times when they did not.]

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<sup>20</sup> See for example *EE* 102 and 565.

<sup>21</sup> *EE* 192.

<sup>22</sup> *EE* 192. See also *EE* 186.

Whether or not such relationships involved either Christian or Muslim rulers, mutuality was the *sine qua non* condition. A case in point is that of the ruler of Valencia, al-Qádir (r.1075–85), and his *alguazil mayor* (prime minister), Aboeça Abenlupon. Their relationship was unsteady, owing to the continuous shift of the counsellor's behaviour between moments of distrust and others of devotional loyalty. In the end, Aboeça opted for allegiance to his lord:

Quando uio el rey que tan de coraçon le siruie et tan lealmientre, fizol mas su priuado et onrrol mas, et asseguro con pleyto et con yura et con cartas quel nunqua le toldrie aquella priuança nin le camiarie por otro ninguno, et que non farie fecho ninguno menos de mostrarlo a el primero, et dessi como el touiesse por bien que assi farie, et que assi como el le siruie lealmientre en todas las cosas, que assi querie el que fuesse sabidor en todos los sus fechos ante que el ninguna cosa fiziesse; que porque ell official que assi fuesse leal a su sennor, lealdad et mucho bien fazer recibiesse de su sennor.<sup>23</sup>

[When the King saw how amicably and loyally he served him, he made him his closest confidant and he honoured him even more, and assured him with a fief, an oath and an official document, that he would never deprive him of that privilege and that he would not exchange him with anyone else, and that he would not do anything before consulting him, and that he would do only what the other considered the most rightful thing to do, and as much as he served him loyally in everything, in the same way he wanted to let him know everything before doing it; because when a counsellor was so loyal to his lord, he should receive loyalty and great benevolence in return.]

It was clearly a universal rule that kings had the right to be fully revered and respected by their subjects, but only if they behaved moderately and benevolently towards their subordinates. The corollary seems to be that sovereigns who did not manage to be regarded as friends of their people proved, indirectly, to be unsuitable rulers.<sup>24</sup>

The relationships that both Christian and Muslim leaders established with their subjects followed very similar patterns. In both cases, the main concern was the process of selection of trustworthy allies and companions. This process would prove successful only if those in power, independently from any ethnic and religious distinctions, behaved as exemplary friends of their people.

<sup>23</sup> EE 878.

<sup>24</sup> Liuzzo Scorpo, 'Religious Frontiers', pp. 275–77.

## An Emblematic Case Study: El Cid of the *Estoria de España*

An outstanding legendary figure, whose gestures and behaviour conformed to most of the parameters of friendship indicated above, is Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (1043–99), widely known as El Cid.<sup>25</sup> Still regarded as the Spanish national hero, El Cid has achieved an unsurpassed fame through the ages, which he probably began to enjoy during his own lifetime, as demonstrated by the historical and poetic collections which began to appear already in the twelfth century, among which the *Carmen Campidoctoris*.<sup>26</sup> Alongside his early poetic encomium, a Latin prose chronicle known as *Historia Roderici* (henceforth *HR*) and the vernacular epic *Poema de Mio Cid* (henceforth *PMC*) also survived.<sup>27</sup> The latter enhanced the historical picture of this valorous knight with fictional elements, exalting his personal virtues of family man and devoted defender of his lord and his land. The epic character of El Cid has also been celebrated far and wide in drama, prose, sculpture, paintings and even in a Hollywood cinematographic representation made in 1961.<sup>28</sup> The poetic and historical descriptions of El Cid are rich with inter-textual references and innovative features, all of which are impossible to explore in depth here. The main concern of this section, instead,

<sup>25</sup> In all likelihood the appellative derived from the Arabic *sayyidī* (my lord). He also acquired the Latin appellative of *Campidoctor* and the vernacular equivalent of *Campeador*.

<sup>26</sup> For an introduction on the debated dating of this work see the introductory study by Francisco Rico in *Cantar de mio Cid*, ed. Alberto Montaner Frutos (Barcelona: Galaxia Gutenberg, Círculo de Lectores, 2007).

<sup>27</sup> The *Historia Roderici* is also known as *Gesta Roderici*; see the edition by Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *La España del Cid*, 7th edn (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1969), pp. 921–71 and *Historia Roderici*, ed. Emma Falque Rey, in *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis*, LXXI (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), pp. 1–98. For an English version of the *HR* see: Barton and Fletcher, *The World of El Cid*, pp. 90–147. According to Montaner-Escobar, the *HR* as well as the *Chronica Naierensis* are from the late twelfth century; see Alberto Montaner and Ángel Escobar, *Carmen Campidoctoris, o, Poema latino del Campeador* (Madrid: España Nuevo Milenio, 2001). With regard to the poem, there is only one medieval codex which has been preserved in the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, MS Va 7–17. Numerous editions in modern Castilian have been made, among which *Poema de mio Cid*, ed. Ramón Menéndez Pidal (Madrid: La Lectura, 1913) and *Poema de mio Cid*, ed. Pedro M. Cátedra and Bienvenido Carlos Morros (Barcelona: Planeta, 1985).

<sup>28</sup> Some examples, of diverse genres, are the sixteenth-century comedy *Las mocedades del Cid* by Guillén de Castro (1681); *Le Cid* by Corneille (1636); the Catalan *Las hijas del Cid* (1908) by Marquina; the *Leyenda del Cid* (1882) by Zorrilla, which also influenced Darío and Huidobro, who composed respectively *Cosas del Cid* (1901) and *Mio Cid Campeador* (1929). In visual art El Cid was a subject for Salvador Dalí, who painted his *Cid* in 1971 and more recently (2006) for Anna Hyatt Huntington, whose canvas portrayed a sculpture of the hero.

is to present the image of the hero as outlined in the *EE*, since he embodied an emblematic *summa* of all the typologies of friendship discussed above: from the personal, political and vassalic links that he established with his lord and vassals, to the alliances that he signed with some Muslim rulers.

In all likelihood, the main sources of reference for this part of the *EE* were the *HR*, the chronicle by Ben Alcama and the *PMC*.<sup>29</sup> Nonetheless, the original Alfonsine project was partially corrupted once it passed into the hands of the late thirteenth- and fourteenth-century compilers charged with the task of completing it.<sup>30</sup> For this study I referred primarily to Pidal's edition of the *EE*, without omitting the most obvious similarities and discrepancies with the deeds of El Cid as recounted in the other surviving manuscripts of the Alfonsine chronicles.<sup>31</sup> The *Crónica de veinte reyes* (henceforth *CVR*) has been particularly useful for comparison, since it is the only post-Alfonsine re-elaboration of the *EE* which preserves the annalistic formula to which, according to the original plan, the entire work should have conformed.<sup>32</sup>

In the *EE* the first mention of El Cid appears in chapter 678, and in chapter 807 he made his official entrance into the main historical frame, when

<sup>29</sup> Diego Catalán, *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X: creación y evolución* (Madrid: Seminario Menéndez Pidal, Universidad Complutense de Madrid: Fundación Ramón Menéndez Pidal: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1992), pp. 99–117. On El Cid in the *EE*, see: Thomas R. Hart, *Studies on the Cantar de mio Cid*, Papers of the Medieval Hispanic Research Seminar, 54 (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 2006); Carlos Alvar, Fernando Gómez Redondo and Georges Martin (eds), *El Cid: de la materia épica a las crónicas caballerescas: actas del congreso internacional 'IX Centenario de la Muerte del Cid', celebrado en la Univ. de Alcalá de Henares los días 19 y 20 de noviembre de 1999* (Alcalá: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2002); Francisco J. Peña Pérez, *El Cid Campeador: historia, leyenda y mito* (Burgos: Editorial Dosssoles, 2000); Gonzalo Santonja, *El Cid: historia, literatura y leyenda* ([n.p.]: Sociedad Estatal España Nuevo Milenio, 2001); Nancy Joe Dyer (ed.), *El Mio Cid del taller alfonsí: versión en prosa en la Primera Crónica General y en la Crónica de veinte reyes* (Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 1995); Mikel de Epalza and Suzanne Guellouz (eds), *Le Cid: personnage historique et littéraire: anthologie de textes arabes, espagnols, français et latins avec traductions* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1983).

<sup>30</sup> This is evident, above all, in the sections following Chapter 896 of the *PCG*.

<sup>31</sup> Menéndez Pidal's *Primera Crónica General* was built upon two manuscripts (Esc. Y-i-2 and Esc. X-i-4), the second of which was probably based on such post-Alfonsine elaborations. See also Diego Catalán, 'Crónicas generales y cantares de gesta: *El Mio Cid* de Alfonso X y el del pseudo Ben-Alfaray', *Hispanic Review*, 31 (1963): pp. 195–215 and 291–306, at pp. 207–15; Brian Powell, *Epic and Chronicle: The 'Poema de mio Cid' and the 'Crónica de veinte reyes'* (London: M.H.R.A., 1983).

<sup>32</sup> The edition used for this study is *Crónica de veinte reyes*, ed. César Hernández Alonso and Enrique del Diego Simón and Jesús María Jabato Saro (Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 1991).

King Ferdinand the Great dubbed him a knight. According to the Alfonsine version, during Rodrigo's entire life, the vassallic relationships in which he was involved occupied a focal position. On the one hand, there were the bonds that he established with the local aristocracy; on the other hand, the pledges that the Muslim rulers frequently swore to him, in the beginning as a vassal of his Christian lords, and subsequently as the self-made ruler of Valencia.<sup>33</sup> Sancho II proclaimed El Cid his vassal and counsellor when he was involved in the succession crisis with his brother Alfonso VI. Unlike the relationships that Sancho engaged with other members of his court, a more personal one seems to have tied him to El Cid:

Desi tomo luego al Çid por la mano et sacol a parte, et dixol: 'ruegouos que me consegedes uos en como faga en este fecho, et que uos uenga emiente agora de lo que mio padre uos dixo quando se querie finar: que non serie mal conseiado quien creeruos quisiessse: et por esso uos di yo un condado en mi tierra; et agora si de uos non e conseio, non le atiendo de omne en el mundo.'<sup>34</sup>

[And so he took El Cid's hand, he took him aside and said: 'I beg for your advice about how I should behave in such a situation, and I beg you to remember what my father told you before he died: that the person who trusts you will not be deceived: and for this reason I gave you a county in my land; and now, if I do not receive any advice from you, then I would not expect it from any other man in the world'.]

His amicable attitude towards Rodrigo is confirmed in the *HR*, which recounts how nobly El Cid was welcomed at court both as a knight and as a loyal vassal:

Hunc autem Rodericum Didaci Santius, rex totius Castelle et dominator Hispanie, diligenter nutriuit et cingulum militia eidem cinxit. (*HR*, ch. 4)

[Sancho, King of Castile and lord of Spain, brought Rodrigo Díaz up in his household and girded him with the belt of knighthood.]

<sup>33</sup> Edmund de Chasca, 'The King-Vassal Relationship in *El Poema de Mio Cid*', *Hispanic Review*, 21 (1953): pp. 183–92.

<sup>34</sup> *EE* 817.

Rex autem Sanctius adeo diligebat Rodericum Didaci multa dilectione et nimio amore, quod constituit eum principem super omnes militiam suam. (*HR*, ch. 5)<sup>35</sup>

[King Sancho valued Rodrigo Díaz so highly, with great esteem and affection, that he made him commander of his whole military following.]

In the *EE* the emphasis shifted onto more sentimental and personal elements on which their relationship was based. In fact, the noble Rodrigo occupied a privileged position at court for his moral strength, as much as he did for his military skills.

When King García captured his brother, Sancho II (*EE* 822), El Cid rescued him, gaining in such a way Sancho's allegiance. But a shadow loomed over the loyal vassal. Even though Sancho II never doubted Rodrigo's goodwill and values, he did not hesitate to remind him of the immense favours that his father, King Ferdinand I, and he himself had granted him. Sancho clearly appealed to his vassal's sense of duty and gratitude, rather than trusting his benevolence blindly. *EE* 831 is an instance of this, as it shows how rapidly benevolence could turn into distrust and punishment. Sancho II commanded El Cid to go to Zamora, ruled by his sister, Urraca, in order to convince her to surrender. When she refused, the King accused El Cid of betrayal and ordered him to leave his dominions. The royal decision was the first of a series of mistakes which brought about the King's fall and, ultimately, his death. His errors of judgement demonstrated both his lack of wisdom and his inability to select worthy candidates to access his close circle. In fact, while expelling El Cid, Sancho accepted Vellido Dolfos, the vilest of the traitors, as his vassal, without being able to foresee his treachery to come.

Unlike the earlier account presented in the *HR*, in the *EE*, before expiring, Sancho revealed that he considered those accidents the righteous punishment for his misbehaviour, and particularly for having contested his father's will regarding the division of the throne by trying to usurp his sibling's possessions.<sup>36</sup> His punishment also seemed to depend on the fact that he had mistreated his loyal friend and vassal, Rodrigo Díaz. In order to repair his error, Sancho begged his vassals and friends to perpetuate the memory of the good actions performed by El Cid, so that the new king would accept him as a vassal and,

<sup>35</sup> *Historia latina de Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar: edición facsímil del manuscrito 9/4922 (olim A-189) de la Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia*, ed. Gonzalo Martínez Díez, José Manuel Ruiz and Irene Ruiz Albi (Burgos: [Ayuntamiento de Burgos, Instituto Municipal de Cultura: Caja de Burgos], 1999), pp. 54 and 65.

<sup>36</sup> Significantly, in the *PMC* Sancho is never referred directly and he does not appear as a character.



therefore, 'inherit' his friendship.<sup>37</sup> Alfonso VI welcomed his brother's request; but it was El Cid who refused the royal honours – in the beginning at least – since he suspected Alfonso VI to be involved in Sancho's murder. Those events signalled the beginning of a period characterized by continuous tensions and the atmosphere was not eased when El Cid publicly threatened Alfonso VI's royal authority by challenging his credibility.<sup>38</sup>

As West argued, contradicting Menéndez Pidal's view that Alfonso VI's personal jealousy and sense of inferiority generated such enmity, the machinations at court worked against El Cid as well as against the sovereign himself.<sup>39</sup> In a more recent study, Andrés Gamba also demystified Pidal's idea and remarked upon the historical importance of the military and political actions undertaken by Alfonso VI.<sup>40</sup> However, the influence exercised by El Cid on the King has never been denied and it also appeared in the *EE*.<sup>41</sup> After numerous hardships, the two leaders (each in his own right) reached an agreement thanks to El Cid's commitment and skills:

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<sup>37</sup> *EE* 838.

<sup>38</sup> *EE* 845.

<sup>39</sup> Geoffrey West, 'Medieval Historiography Misconstrued: The Exile of the Cid, Rodrigo Díaz, and The Supposed *Invidia* of Alfonso VI', *Medium Aevum*, 52 (1983): pp. 286–99; R. Menéndez Pidal, 'Adefonsus imperator toletanus, magnificus triumphator', in Pidal (ed.), *Historia y epopeya* (Madrid: Editorial Hernando, 1934), pp. 239–62. See also R. Menéndez Pidal, *Castilla, la tradición, el idioma*, 4th edn (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1966), pp. 95–139. Another discrediting image of Alfonso VI was given in Ramón Menéndez Pidal, *El imperio hispánico y los cinco reinos. Dos etapas en la estructura política de España* (Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, 1950); Ramón Menéndez Pidal and E. Lévi-Provençal, 'Alfonso VI y su hermana la infanta Urraca', *Al-Andalus*, 13 (1948): pp. 157–66. Pidal's view was also adopted by Luis García de Valdeavellano, *Historia de España: de los orígenes a la baja Edad Media*, 2 vols, 4th edn (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1968), II, pp. 317 and 348. See also Joseph O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 214.

<sup>40</sup> Andrés Gamba, 'Alfonso VI y el Cid. Reconsideración de un enigma histórico', in *Actas del Congreso Internacional El Cid, Poema e Historia, 12–16 julio, 1999*, ed. César Fernández Alonso (Burgos: Ayuntamiento de Burgos, 2000), pp. 189–204. See also Hilda Grassotti, 'La ira regia en Castilla y León', *Cuadernos de Historia de España*, 41–3 (1965): pp. 5–135; María Eugenia Lacarra, *El Poema de mio Cid: realidad histórica e ideológica* (Madrid: Ediciones Jose Porrúa Turanzas, S.A., 1980), pp. 8–31; Ghislaine Fournès, 'Un motivo cidiano en la obra de Alfonso X: la ira regia', in *El Cid: de la materia épica a las crónicas caballerescas*, ed. Carlos Alvar, Fernando Gómez Redondo and Georges Martin (Alcalá: Universidad de Alcalá de Henares, 2002), pp. 285–94.

<sup>41</sup> Gamba, 'Alfonso VI y el Cid', p. 204.



Pero despues estudieron en uno, a las uezes abenidos, a las uezes desabenidos, tanto quel echo de la tierra el rey; mas al cabo fueron amigos: assi lo sopo merecer el Çid.<sup>42</sup>

[But then, they were together, sometimes in agreement, some others in disagreement, so much that one day the King exiled him; but in the end they made friends: because El Cid deserved it.]

From the narrative of the *EE* it seems that Alfonso VI decided to accept El Cid as his vassal in order to face the growing instability that, in part, the *Campeador* himself had generated. Their friendship was sealed by Rodrigo's wedding with one of the King's relatives, Jimena; a union which should have reinforced their military and political alliances.

Friend, ally, vassal and counsellor, El Cid also played the role of intermediary in the diplomatic operations between monarchs, and particularly between his lord, Alfonso VI, and the Muslim rulers of the South. His intervention in favour of the King of Seville, al-Mutamid (r.1069–91), against the King of Granada, 'Abd Allāh (r. 1073–90), is particularly revealing. El Cid called upon 'Abd Allāh and his Christian allies to stop their advance towards the kingdom of Seville, which was at peace with Alfonso VI. Regardless of his message, the attack continued and El Cid was forced to intervene. In the ensuing battle, he defeated his adversaries and advanced towards Seville, where he was rewarded by al-Mutamid, who also paid the *paria* (tribute) that he owed to Alfonso VI as his vassal.<sup>43</sup> This mission caused envy among the courtiers, who persuaded Alfonso VI to expel El Cid from his dominions.

A troubled exile was waiting for the loyal knight, Rodrigo. The sources are discordant about whether or not El Cid pursued his destiny alone. The *EE* narrates that 'El Çid enuio luego por sus parientes et sus amigos', who followed him, respecting their vassalic duties.<sup>44</sup> By contrast, according to the *HR*, Rodrigo left his sorrowful friends behind and went alone from Castile to Barcelona.<sup>45</sup> There are grounds for supposing that in the *HR* the reason behind the omission of any reference to the support received by El Cid from his vassals and friends might be due to the fact that, by facing his unfair banishment alone, his figure emerged as an all-round hero. However, as Richard Fletcher argued, perhaps more than for his personal qualities:

<sup>42</sup> *EE* 845.

<sup>43</sup> *EE* 849.

<sup>44</sup> El Cid summoned his relatives and friends. *EE* 851.

<sup>45</sup> *HR*, ch. 12, p. 57.

Rodrigo's truly remarkable career was made possible by the distinctive circumstances of his age: the instability of the *taifa* principalities; the acceptability of tribute-taking as the primary mode of Christian-Islamic relationship in Spain; the ease of crossing cultural frontiers; the absence of any ideology of crusade; the availability of mercenary knights.<sup>46</sup>

For his vassals it would have been more deleterious to follow their lord, Rodrigo, thus becoming enemies of the sovereign, than abandoning him. In any case betrayal was inescapable: either they did not fulfil their duty of loyalty towards El Cid or, by following him, they would betray their most powerful lord, the King. Remarkably, in the *EE* El Cid's companions are presented as models of virtues to emulate. Nonetheless, their idealization vanished progressively. The more we read about El Cid's company, the more we realize that their actions were partly dictated by their yearning for material rewards:

Et fueron todas las compannas muy pagadas por que se partiera todo tan bien et dado todo su derecho a cada uno en la su guisa.<sup>47</sup>

[All the members of his company were satisfied for the fact that everything was so righteously shared among them and that everybody obtained the right rewards.]

Et partio luego con todos los suyos la ganacia que auie fecha.<sup>48</sup>

[Then he shared what he had gained with all his company.]

The number of amicable relationships involving El Cid cannot underestimate the friendships he made with individuals of other faiths and, particularly, with some Muslim rulers, whom he supported either against other members of their own dynasties, or against their Christian antagonists. For example, during his first exile (1081–87), Rodrigo entered the service of the Emir of Saragossa,<sup>49</sup> as

<sup>46</sup> *The World of El Cid*, p. 91.

<sup>47</sup> *EE* 856.

<sup>48</sup> *EE* 860.

<sup>49</sup> *EE* 860. In *CVR* X:XVII it is said that '... puso el Çid su amor muy grande con Almondafar, rrey de Çaragoça, et el rrey rresçibióle en la villa mucho honrradamente e fizole mucha honrra' '... El Cid devoted his benevolence to Almondarar, King of Saragossa, and the King received him in his realm honourably'.

described in *EE* 860, *CVR* X:XVII and *HR* (ch. 12), all suggesting that documents containing the terms of such a coalition were officially signed.<sup>50</sup>

El Cid always supported Alfonso VI's allies, as much as he refused to provide any help to those who conspired against the King's life and reputation. An interesting case is *EE* 890, which narrates how in 1087 Alfonso VI decided to recover the eastern areas of the Peninsula, occupied by the Muslims. In order to undertake this mission he asked El Cid to intervene on his side. His faithful vassal promptly agreed and managed to marshal a host of 7,000 soldiers with whom he advanced towards the Aragonese frontiers. The Muslims decided to sign an agreement, which in all likelihood was dictated by fear, although they clearly sought to obtain protection, military resources and manpower. Similarly, the King of Denia, once he realized that the King of Saragossa was advancing towards Valencia, sent a messenger to El Cid, offering his friendship and asking for protection.<sup>51</sup>

To pursue the matter of inter-religious relationships further, it is worth mentioning the character of Abengalvón, ruler of Molina, who is depicted in the *PMC* as a perfect prototype of friend and ally. The *Cantar Segundo* of the epic poem narrates how El Cid sent some of his trustworthy vassals to escort his wife, Jimena, and his two daughters to the besieged city of Valencia. For such a journey Rodrigo relied on the help of the Muslim Abengalvón, whom he regarded as 'mio amigo es de paz'.<sup>52</sup> The Muslim ruler, who was asked for 100 knights, in fact provided 200.<sup>53</sup> The extra knights voluntarily supplied are a clear marker of generosity in their amicable relationship and in this case the rule of transmission of friendship is also respected; in fact, Abengalvón behaved amicably towards Minaya Álar Fáñez and others among El Cid's retinue, who were escorting the *Campeador's* family. When Abengalvón reached the place where Minaya was resting, he honoured him by adopting Arabic customs, showing his goodwill and loyalty to him as an 'inherited' friend.<sup>54</sup> As a reward for Abengalvón's noble behaviour, Minaya declared that he would celebrate his deeds before his lord, El Cid: '¡Y[a] Ave[n]galvón, amígo!' sodes sin falla!<sup>55</sup>

<sup>50</sup> M.J. Lacarra, 'Dos tratatod de paz y alianza entre Sancho el de Peñalén y Muctadir de Zaragoza (1069 y 1073)', in *Colonización, parias, repoblación y otros studio*, ed. M.J. Lacarra (Zaragoza: Anubar, 1981), pp. 77–94. Some examples are *EE* 901 and *CVR* X:LV.

<sup>51</sup> *EE* 890.

<sup>52</sup> My friend in peace. *PMC*, line 1464.

<sup>53</sup> *PMC*, lines 1477–79.

<sup>54</sup> *PMC*, lines 1517–19.

<sup>55</sup> Ha now, Abengalvón, there is no doubt that you are his friend! *PMC*, line 1528.

This is what the *PMC* tells us, while far less attention is dedicated to those events in the *CVR* X:LXIX, where the figure of the Muslim ally, Abengalvón, is completely neglected, except for the reference to his contribution to escort the three ladies. In *EE* 924, Abengalvón is defined as a loyal vassal, but there is no reference to any personal friendship between him and El Cid. Despite Abengalvón's virtues, his admirable actions were not particularly praised, since they were regarded as normal duties required by his subordinate position:

Et el Çid enbio por el moro Abencanon, et començol a gradescer mucho quanto bien et quanto onrradamente lo seruiera en onrrar a su muger et a sus fijas, en las servir tan onrradamente commo el sabie. Et quando el moro lo oyo, respondio: 'sennor Çid, esto et mas deuo yo fazer por ti, ca desque yo en el tu sennorio so, tu me as defendido fasta aqui'. Et el Çid prometiol que assy lo farie cab adelante. Et desi el moro besol la mano, et despedios del, et tornosse pora Molina.<sup>56</sup>

[El Cid summoned the Muslim Abengalvón, and was very grateful for the loyal and honourable service that he had performed and for honouring his wife and daughters as respectably as he could. And when the Muslim heard it, he answered: 'my lord El Cid, I should do this and even more for you, since you have always defended me for all the time I have been under your lordship, until now'. And El Cid promised to do the same also in the future. And so, the Muslim kissed his hand, and he left to go back to Molina.]

Unlike the *PMC*, in which the agreement between El Cid and Abengalvón resembled a contractual link between peers, in the *EE* the Muslim knight was described and treated according to his religious identity and social status, which were perceived as inferior. However, if one revises the apparently apologetic lines of the *PMC*, a thought-provoking element emerges which might subvert, fully or partially, the assumption according to which the Muslim knight acted out of pure love and benevolence. In fact, once Abengalvón reached Molina, he declared:

Ondrar vos hemos todos ca tal es la su auze,  
maguer que mal le queremos, non ge lo podremos  
fer.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *EE* 924.

<sup>57</sup> *PMC*, line 1524.

[We all have to honour him, this is our bad luck;  
then, even if we do not like him,  
we still cannot do anything against him.]

The figure of Abengalvón has been studied both as a single persona and as a symbol of his culture. He is emblematic of the submission of Muslim society to the Christian yoke, but at the same time:

the faithful Moorish vassal is, in the end, not quite an exemplary version of virtue: this hyper-noble Moor is revealed as a conceit, he acts a set of conventional possibilities defined and circumscribed by the power of the Christian hero.<sup>58</sup>

Considering all this, I would argue that in both the *PMC* and in the *EE*, the definition of Abengalvón as ‘amigo de paz’ was adopted as an ennobling title to define a mere military ally.<sup>59</sup>

Significantly, in the *EE* Abengalvón is not an isolated case. Another Muslim figure, who only appears in the Alfonsine chronicle, is the ‘Great Sultan of Persia’. Despite the lack of any direct acquaintance with El Cid, the Sultan sent his envoy to entreat the *Campeador*’s love and friendship. The messenger’s words exemplify the prototype of friendship in absence, that is to say *amicitia* based on the knowledge of the others by means of their fames and renowned virtues:

Mio sennor, el grant soldan de Persia, alla do esta, oyendo la muy grant fama del bien que en uos ha, uos enbia mucho saludar, et tieneuos por su amigo tanto commo el mas amigo que con el esta cadal dia; et esto fizo el por los muy grandes esfueros que de uos oyo contar, et por ende enbiauos todas las cosas que uos agora mostrare.<sup>60</sup>

[My lord, the great Sultan of Persia, from where he is, having heard of your great fame and good deeds, sends his regards to you, and he considers you his friend as much as he does with his closest friends with whom he lives every day; and he does this because he was told of the great deeds that you performed, and for this reason he sent you all the goods that I am going to show you now.]

<sup>58</sup> Israel Burshatin, ‘The Docile Image: The Moor as a Figure of Force, Subservience, and Nobility in the *Poema de mio Cid*’, *Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, 31 (1984): pp. 269–80, at p. 277.

<sup>59</sup> Lacarra, *El poema de Mio Cid*, p. 200; Louise Mirre, *Women, Jews, and Muslims in the Texts of Reconquest Castile* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), pp. 49–50.

<sup>60</sup> *EE* 947. Neither in the *PMC* nor in the *CVR* there is any reference to this episode.

Even more loquacious is the exchange between El Cid's *almoxerif* (minister operating as tax-collector) and the Sultan's messenger:

... et començol a dezir que tan grant fuera la nonbradia et el grant prez de armas et los muchos nobles fechos que sonaran del Çid en la tierra dUltramar, que por aquella razon se mouiera de enuiar aquel presente et de auer su amor.<sup>61</sup>

[... and he started saying that the personal fame, the noble actions and the military enterprises carried out by El Cid were widely known in the land of Ultramar, and that was the reason which prompted the Sultan to send his gifts and to ask for El Cid's love.]

It seems beyond question that El Cid accepted the Persian Sultan as his friend because of his privileged social status. In fact, as a sign of respect, and even more because he realized how powerful and wealthy the Sultan was, Rodrigo:

Et entendiendo muy bien que aquel que tal presente le enbiaua era muy rico et de grant poder et muy franco de coraçon, dixo a aquel pariente del soldan que querie fazer onrra a su sennor qual nunca fiziera a ningun moro desde el dia que nasçiera; et esto era que lo querie abraçar ...<sup>62</sup>

[Realizing that the person who sent him such a gift was very wealthy, powerful and of noble heart, he said to that relative of the Sultan's that he wanted to honour his lord as he had never done before with any other Muslim since the day he was born; and that he wanted to embrace him ...]

This declaration supports the aforementioned statement according to which, in the *EE* the figure of Abengalvón neither occupied a focal position in the story nor in the network of personal relationships involving El Cid. In fact, here Rodrigo seemed to ignore him completely while declaring that the only Muslim to whom he would devote respect and loyalty was the Sultan of Persia.

Undoubtedly, in the *EE* El Cid occupied a *sui generis* position: as a knight, first, and as the self-made ruler of Valencia later, he managed to create an intricate web of political friendships around him. As an official intermediary, El Cid signed treaties of peace that could favour his own position and enhance his chances of success, but without ever betraying his lords. An example of

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<sup>61</sup> *EE* 948.

<sup>62</sup> *EE* 947.

his multidirectional policy appears in *EE* 892, which narrates how Rodrigo intervened after the *alcalde* of Murviedro had pledged his homage to the King of Denia in order to obtain his protection against the King of Saragossa, who was advancing towards Valencia.<sup>63</sup> El Cid proved to be a skilful politician, able to knit together all the available threads to create a strong web, the knots of which were perfectly shaped around both his own persona and that of his lord. The climax of all this was the conquest of Valencia. Despite his lack of royal origins, Rodrigo behaved exemplarily, declaring that he would listen to his people's requests and rule righteously by distributing lands and profits among those who deserved them.<sup>64</sup>

The comparison between the historical and poetic portraits of El Cid allows several conclusions to be drawn about the nature and characteristics of the friendships that he made. Although they involved differently-ranked exponents of his social world, from the king to the magnates, the soldiers and even the believers of another faith, it would be appropriate to talk about a circle of friendships of which El Cid was the centre. His vicissitudes present numerous elements, which fit both the general patterns of *amicitia* as well as that of political alliances. Additionally, inter-religious implications strongly affected the *Campeador's* personal, social and political life. Inevitably, all of these agreements were subjected to changes, above all when avarice and thirst of power undermined their stability. In fact, at the beginning of his career El Cid lost the love of his lord after the conspiracy set in motion against him by some envious courtiers. Eventually, his friendship with Alfonso VI was restored (*EE* 927) and that was possible only because the noble-hearted Rodrigo, during his entire banishment, had repeatedly never committed any act of treachery against the King. El Cid's experience represents an exception since there were other cases in which friendship failed irremediably, without any possibility of being re-established.

The Alfonsine descriptions of these complex networks of interfaith relationships bear the mark of the widespread diffidence felt towards believers of different faiths. What is significant, however, is that the accomplishment of treacherous actions was regarded as much worse and even more dangerous than any declaration of enmity which could arise between representatives of different

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<sup>63</sup> *EE* 892.

<sup>64</sup> Far less detailed is the description given in the *CVR*, although his good faith and attempt to rule as a friend of his people are mentioned. *CVR* X:LXV: '... prometió a los moros de les fazer mucho bien e mucha merçed, e mandóles que se entregasen de todo lo suyo'; '... he promised to the Muslims to be good and merciful with them, and he ordered them to administer all their possessions.'

faiths.<sup>65</sup> Although it was unlikely to happen, still a Muslim – usually belonging to the highest social ranks – could be regarded as an excellent friend, when he respected the indispensable condition of loyalty towards his allies.<sup>66</sup> Nonetheless – as discussed in the next section – the conditions were much different for those who lived and operated at the bottom of that same social ladder.

### Muslims, Jews and Christians: What Kinds of Friendships Were Possible?

It is fundamental to introduce here the much debated concept of *convivencia* (coexistence)<sup>67</sup> experienced in Medieval Iberia to understand the relationships between the different ethnic and religious groups and the way in which such

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<sup>65</sup> Albert I. Bagby Jr, 'The Moslem in the *Cantigas* of Alfonso X, El Sabio', *Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, 20 (1973): pp. 173–207.

<sup>66</sup> Rebecca L. Slitt, 'Justifying Cross-Cultural Friendships: Bohemond, Firuz, and the Fall of Antioch', *Viator*, 38 (2007): pp. 339–50.

<sup>67</sup> The concept of *convivencia* was first coined by Américo Castro in his work *España en su historia: cristianos, moros y judíos*, 2nd edn (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1983), pp. 198–205. Two different interpretations of this subject were given by Sánchez Albornoz and Américo Castro; read further about the polemic generated by the two contrasting views in José Gómez-Martínez, *Américo Castro y el origen de los españoles: historia de una polémica* (Madrid: Gredos, 1975). For an introduction to the debated concept of *convivencia* see: Thomas F. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain in the Early Middle Ages* (Princeton: University Press, 1979). For a survey of historiography, see H. Salvador Martínez, *La convivencia en la España del siglo XIII: perspectivas alfonsíes* (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2006); Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Alex Novikoff, 'Between Tolerance and Intolerance in Medieval Spain: An Historiographic Enigma', *Medieval Encounters*, 11 (2005): pp. 7–36; Cary J. Nederman, *Worlds of Difference: European Discourses of Toleration, c. 1100–1550* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000); Mark D. Meyerson and Edward D. English (eds), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Interaction and Cultural Change* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000); Marcia L. Colish, John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman (eds), *Beyond the Persecuting Society: Religious Toleration Before the Enlightenment* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); David Nirenberg, *Community of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Vivian B. Mann, T.F. Glick and Jerrilynn D. Dodds (eds), *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims and Christians in Medieval Spain* (New York: George Braziller in association with the Jewish Museum, 1992); David Hook and Barry Taylor (eds), *Cultures in Contact in Medieval Spain: Historical and Literary Essays Presented to L.P. Harvey* ([London]: King's College London Medieval Studies, 1989).



historical reality was portrayed in the Alfonsine production.<sup>68</sup> *Convivencia* has been used as a historiographical label to describe the situation experienced by Muslims, Jews and Christians who shared the same Iberian geographical and political space for centuries, even though in practice their social interaction remained extremely limited. The *SP* contain a section aimed at regulating the exchanges between those groups by prescribing behavioural norms for Jews and Muslims while specifying the kinds of relationships that they were allowed or forbidden to establish either among them or with other Christian believers (*SP* VII:XXIV and XXV).

Despite the widespread belief that the Alfonsine court represented a model of tolerance and enlightenment, such a statement is valid only if applied to the learned entourage; that is to say if this phenomenon is analysed predominantly from artistic and literary perspectives. By contrast, official documents reveal that both the King and his court showed clear signs of mistrust towards non-Christian groups, considered as potential sources of political and social crisis.<sup>69</sup> However, this situation of coexistence was very profitable for the territories in which it was experienced, above all for economic reasons. In fact, the social segregation of Muslims and Jews did not coincide with their economic isolation, since they were effectively one of the most prolific sources of income for the kingdoms to which they belonged and to which they paid tributes. Whilst acknowledging the historical relevance of *convivencia* and its originating factors, it is worth exploring the extent to which the narrations elaborated under Alfonso X's patronage resembled historically recognizable events and attitudes, and which of them were, instead, mere literary, legal and didactic models which the sovereign sought to impose.

A useful insight into this subject is given in *SP* VII:XXIV and XXV, which concern the regulation of duties, responsibilities and rights (the latter being relatively few if compared with the prohibitions imposed on them) regarding Jews and Muslims.<sup>70</sup> For instance, they were obliged by the law to wear distinctive items of clothes from Christians, so that they could be identified and recognized

<sup>68</sup> See *SP* VII:XXIV and XXV. See also Mirrer, *Women, Jews, and Muslims*, pp. 47–65; *Medieval Iberia: Readings from Christian, Muslim and Jewish Sources*, ed. Olivia Remie Constable (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), pp. 269–75; Marjorie Ratcliffe, 'Judíos y musulmanes en la jurisprudencia medieval española,' *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos*, 9 (1983): pp. 423–39.

<sup>69</sup> R. Burns, 'Jews and Moors in the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X the Learned: A Background Perspective', in *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence, Studies in Honour of Angus MacKay*, ed. Roger Collins and Anthony Goodman (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 46–62.

<sup>70</sup> Burns, 'Jews and Moors in the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X'.

as 'others'. If that was not enough, the law also forbade Christians to have any close relationship (especially sexual intercourse, but also any close contact based on mutual trust and exchange of confidence) with Jews, heretics and Muslims. Even so, Jews were entitled to some benefits under the law; for instance, they could have their own synagogue if a Christian sovereign allowed it. By contrast, building mosques on Christian soil was severely forbidden.<sup>71</sup> However, all the non-Christian groups were allowed to perform their own rituals, albeit with the prescription not to preach and, above all, to convert Christians to their faiths.

Similarly, the law forbade Christians to impose conversion coercively.<sup>72</sup> But one thing was a legal statement and another was the practice, as suggested by a careful reading of *CSM* 192. The poem narrates a miracle which happened in Consuegra, near Toledo, where a devoted Christian was constantly arguing with his Muslim servant. The latter used to defame the Virgin's name and all the attempts made by the Christian to convert him turned into failure. Not even the promise of receiving part of the Christian's wealth made the Muslim change his mind. One day the Christian placed his irreverent servant in a cave, where the Muslim fought against the devil's temptations for two nights. On the third day, the Virgin appeared to him and told him to repent and abjure his false faith. At that point the Muslim decided to convert and, when he finally went out of the cave, his master also convinced him to be baptized. The Christian's attempt to convert his servant would have generated some legal issues, since the law forbade religious pressure (even if, as in this case, imposed by a Christian). The *cantiga* does not describe how these events developed afterwards, although nothing seems to suggest that the aforementioned legal norms were applied.

This example, as several others, suggest first that the Alfonsine law, as a prescriptive *corpus* of philosophical and didactical value, did not always reflect faithfully what happened in reality; second, that the relationships that Jews and Muslims established with Christians, although they might be defined as friendships, were in fact pragmatic agreements which accentuated even more the social disparity of the contractors. However, despite the high degree of social segregation experienced by those minority groups, inter-religious connections, although very rare, might occur. What is enlightening and worth examining is when, under which conditions and circumstances, and to what extent those sporadic and particular cases were recognized and defined as friendships.

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<sup>71</sup> *SP* VII:XXV:I.

<sup>72</sup> *SP* VII:XXV:II.

*Relationships with and between Muslim Subjects: Areas of Integration and Segregation*

While numerous relationships between Muslims and Christians experienced in medieval Iberia were in fact mere political alliances, there were differences in the conditions that they implied, as most of them were usually vassalic oaths that the contractors swore to their superiors. Contacts established between and with individuals belonging to the lowest ranks present different characteristics.<sup>73</sup> A clear dichotomy emerges from the Alfonsine chronicles, in which Muslims are either depicted as worthy political allies or as treacherous enemies. The martial value of those relationships was reinforced by the fact that the title *amigo*, when referring to a Muslim person, did hardly ever imply any personal link. Louise Mirrer, like Burshatin before her, argued that Muslim friendly attitudes towards Christians, whether existent, were merely proof of their weakness, rather than signs of their amicability.<sup>74</sup> Mirrer went as far as defining them as ‘feminized’, rather than friendly, attitudes.<sup>75</sup> A very similar idea of weakness – in certain aspects comparable with female fragility – is recognizable in some of the descriptions given in the Alfonsine chronicles.

Needless to say that there were some exceptions. For instance, a much more positive description of a Muslim character appears in *EE* 871, which narrates how the Archbishop Bernard of Toledo, supported by Queen Constance of Burgundy (r.1079–93), ordered a company of Christian knights to enter the Muslim mosque of Toledo to destroy it. The *EE* recounts that Alfonso VI was furious about their initiative, since he had signed an armistice with the Muslims of Toledo, promising that he would allow them to keep their *mezquita* as a safe place of worship. The Queen’s and the Archbishop’s decisions threatened

<sup>73</sup> Ratcliffe, ‘Judíos y musulmanes’, pp. 423–39; Robert A. MacDonald, ‘Law and Politics: Alfonso’s Program of Political Reform’, in *The Worlds of Alfonso the Learned and James the Conqueror: Intellect and Force in the Middle Ages*, ed. Robert I. Burns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 180–99; John Boswell, *The Royal Treasure: Muslim Communities Under the Crown of Aragon in the Fourteenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 107–64, 259–322; O’Callaghan, ‘The Mudejars of Castile and Portugal in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries’, in *Muslims Under Latin Rule, 1100–1300*, ed. James M. Powell (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 11–56; Robert Burns, ‘Muslims in the Thirteenth-Century Realms of Aragon: Interaction and Reaction’, in Powell, *Muslims Under Latin Rule*, pp. 57–102; David Nirenberg, ‘Muslims in Christian Iberia, 1000–1526: Varieties of Mudejar Experience’, in *The Medieval World*, ed. P. Linehan and J. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 60–76.

<sup>74</sup> Burshatin, ‘The Docile Image’, pp. 269–80.

<sup>75</sup> Mirrer, *Women, Jews, and Muslims*, p. 4.

Alfonso's authority, since such a violent action could have been perceived as a sign of the King's volte-face. If Alfonso VI had supported the Queen's decision, he would have been accused of treachery by the Muslims for breaking the terms of their previous agreement. For this reason, the King decided to punish the Archbishop and the Queen in order to prove his goodwill. Significantly, the Muslim community begged Alfonso VI mercifully to forgive both of them.<sup>76</sup> The Muslims' magnanimity suggested that 'los alaraues eran omnes entendudos et sabios' although in fact they played a double role.<sup>77</sup> On the one hand, they submitted to Alfonso VI's power, performing actions which recalled the traditional vassalic rituals, such as bowing in front of him and kissing his hands and feet. On the other hand, by forgiving the Queen and the Archbishop for the offences brought to their community, the Muslims stand as models of moral virtues and outstanding wisdom. Needless to say that behind their friendly words there were other and more pragmatic concerns. They implored Alfonso VI not to kill the responsible Queen and Archbishop for fear of possible repercussions by their followers. Moreover, the Muslims of Toledo probably foresaw that Alfonso VI would reward them and compensate their mercy, as the *EE* suggests:

... et gradescio mucho a los moros las buenas razones quel auien dicho, prometiendoles que les farie mucho bien et mucha merced por ello.<sup>78</sup>

[... and he was very thankful to the Muslims for all the good reasons that they had adduced, and he promised to reward them very well and to be generous for what they had done.]

Following the same pragmatic line of thought, Alfonso VI's gratitude towards the Muslims was, in all likelihood, a strategic measure aimed at preserving his own image and reputation, rather than being a sign of real trust and benevolence.

What is particularly interesting is the fact that only in cases of political and military agreements the lexicon of friendship was conventionally adopted to refer to Muslims. By contrast, in any other circumstances, the most ennobling title used to define them, at least as far as the Alfonsine chronicles are concerned, is 'uos omnes buenos' ('you, good men'), which also referred to members of the ruling elites.<sup>79</sup> Yet, the adoption of such labels does not suggest any type of personal or emotional involvement.

<sup>76</sup> *EE* 871.

<sup>77</sup> ... the Muslims were judicious and wise men. *EE* 871.

<sup>78</sup> *EE* 871..

<sup>79</sup> You, honourable men. *EE* 952.

Other contemporary sources, such as James I of Aragon's autobiography, the *Llibre dels fets*, provide additional examples of how Muslims were described positively whenever they behaved as loyal and useful allies, particularly in military contexts.<sup>80</sup> For example, according to the *Llibre*, in 1229, during the campaigns to conquer Majorca, which was under threat of Saracen attacks from different districts, the Saracens diverted the city's water supplies to force the Christian siege to an end, but some of James I's men pushed the attack even further and defeated them. What followed is perhaps even more interesting: Ben Aebet (Ibn 'Abid) was sent as a messenger to James, offering food supplies for the Christian army, who would have otherwise been unable to pursue their siege. The *encomium* that James bestowed on his Muslim ally, naming him 'an angel', reads like an emotionally driven declaration of gratitude:

So acted that angel that God had sent us; and when I say angel I mean the Saracen, who was so good to us that we took him for an angel, and for that reason we say he was like an angel ... And we trusted him because we found nothing but truth in him.<sup>81</sup>

This is a superb example of how ethnic and religious differences – which might have functioned as group labels for general classifications of enmity – did not prevent Muslims from moving across categories, thanks to their individual actions and characteristics. But the relevance of this example is even more prominent when compared with modern psychological research, which suggests that the paradoxical perception and representation of 'the enemy' enable people to justify their attitudes and behaviours towards them.<sup>82</sup> However, while in modern war propaganda such paradoxical images are never presented at the same time or on the same poster, this was not the case for our medieval Iberian sources, in which the Saracens, both as a group and as individuals, were simultaneously described (even within the same source) as victims, betrayers, collaborators and even angels. To fully understand this logic, one should consider a number of factors, including ideas of history writing and preservation of memory, as well as historical contingencies of different types, among them the complex networks of interfaith relationships and collaborations experienced in the Peninsula. This does not mean

<sup>80</sup> *The Book of Deeds of James I of Aragon: A Translation of the Medieval Catalan Llibre dels Fets*, ed. Damian J. Smith and Helena Buffery (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

<sup>81</sup> *The Book of Deeds of James I*, ch. 96, p. 71.

<sup>82</sup> See for example the study by Ofer Zur, 'The Love of Hating: The Psychology of Enmity', *History of European Ideas*, 13:4 (1991): pp. 345–69. Available online at <http://www.zurinstitute.com/enemymaking.html>.

that hostile prediction was not in place; in fact, expectations of misbehaviour and betrayal regularly appeared in the Alfonsine sources, as well as in the *Llibre dels fets*. In the latter, James I narrates that a wall was built in Alzira to divide Muslims from Christians, despite the fact that a truce was signed in 1242.<sup>83</sup> There is also memory of the surrender of Xativa and the subsequent treaty signed to confirm that truce:

... we knew very well that when their power increased, they would revolt against us. Therefore we wished them to leave our land once and for all, safe and secure with their goods and belongings.<sup>84</sup>

Hostile prediction is what made secrecy so relevant in cases of political agreements and diplomatic activities. Yet, once those pacts were officially sealed, they were usually followed by a public display of trust or distrust. Needless to say that these apparently conflicting reactions make perfect sense if considered in the light of both Alfonso X's and James I's strategies to control and preserve power according to, what could be anachronistically defined, their 'realpolitik'.

Overall, in these thirteenth-century sources, there are only a few examples of 'good enemies' (although they tended to stand out from the rest of their peers), which are complemented by a much more numerous range of instances in which Muslim characters are depicted as evil-doers, corrupted by their false beliefs and, for this reason, banned as possible friends and allies. The *CSM* abound with such cases. *CSM* 328, for example, describes Alfonso X's stay in Alcanate during his successful naval campaign aimed at conquering Salé. During this time, his Christian army started calling Alcanate with the new name of Santa María del Puerto, causing great irritation among the Muslim population of the place, who sent a Muslim constable from Jerez to complain with the King. Unsuccessfully, Alfonso X ordered his soldiers to stop using the Christian toponym, but this had already turned into a habit. Only a miracle, performed by the Virgin Mary, who inspired the Muslim constable to offer the city of Alcanate to Alfonso X, saved the precarious situation from irreversible collapse. The constable's role allowed him to confer face-to-face with the monarch, although the King, probably guided by wisdom and widespread prejudices, was reluctant to trust him completely, mainly because the Muslim's goodwill had not been proved previously. Despite the fact that the deal offered by the Muslim constable had been inspired by the Virgin's intervention, his proposal was not accepted by Alfonso X until he received proof of his loyalty. As revealed in *CSM* 345, the

<sup>83</sup> *The Book of Deeds of James I*, ch. 332, p. 256.

<sup>84</sup> *The Book of Deeds of James I*, ch. 332, p. 256 and 275.

King received warnings against treacherous and malevolent Muslims and was recommended to adopt preventive measures to protect his position and power. This poem tells us that, after conquering Jerez, Alfonso X repopulated the city with Christian dwellers, although he allowed the Muslim population to continue living in the region. The events to come showed that such a magnanimous action became his major mistake. In fact, by trusting the Muslim inhabitants and their false signs of reverence and friendship, the King gave them breathing space to organize a violent insurrection against him:

Ca os mouros espreitaron | quando el Rei ben seguro  
estava deles, e toste | foron fazer outro muro  
ontr'o castel' e a vila, | muit' ancho e fort' e duro;  
e daly os do castelo | fillaron-s' a combater. (lines 21–24)<sup>85</sup>

[The Moors lay in wait until the king was sure  
of them, then quickly built another wall  
between the castle and the city, very wide and strong and hard,  
and from there they began to attack those in the castle.]

The Muslims waited peacefully until Alfonso X believed in their goodwill and only at that point they built a new wall within the city and launched from there a new counter-attack against the Christian outposts.

All the examples outlined above reflect a situation of permanent conflict between different ethnic and religious groups. Space for social interaction was extremely limited, as *CSM* 358 also suggests. The poem narrates of the building of the Church of Santa María del Puerto, the works of which were co-ordinated by the master builder Ali, who was a Muslim, but he also witnessed a miracle performed by the Virgin, since he had personally found the cave of perfect stones which would be used to build that church. The poem does not specify whether the builders that Ali directed were all Muslims, but like Ali himself, they were all Alfonso X's subjects. *CSM* 358 shows a situation which was not unusual; that is to say that masters of the Islamic style were in charge of artistic works commissioned by Christians.<sup>86</sup> This confirms that cultural and artistic exchanges

<sup>85</sup> *CSM* 345.

<sup>86</sup> It is possible to recognize the interactions of Muslim, Jewish and Christian elements in the so-termed Mudejar style, whose examples abound in the entire peninsular territory. To quote only some examples: the Church of San Tirso in Sahagún, the monastery of Santa Clara in Tordesillas and the Cathedral of Teruel. See Manuel Valdés Fernández, *Arquitectura mudejar en León y Castilla* (León: Universidad de León, 1984); Teresa Pérez Higuera,



were frequent between the two groups; something which was not common practice in many other fields, where Muslims were generally regarded as inferiors or, worse, as enemies with whom legitimate face-to-face contacts could only occur on the battlefield. *CSM* 344 illustrates this point clearly in the narration of a miracle which happened in Tudia, during the period in which Seville was under Muslim control. Both the Christian and Muslim armies camped side by side overnight, unaware of each other's presence. Miraculously, only at dawn they realized what had happened and, acknowledging the miracle, they signed a truce and departed in peace. The truce itself represented an unexpected achievement in a context ruled by a rigid mentality of war, according to which one could, in certain circumstances, pay respect to a Muslim adversary, but this would not imply any further personal engagement. In the entire poem there is no reference to the lexicon of friendship, which was instead used either in the agreements signed between political leaders or in those sporadic cases in which the Muslim contractors had converted to Christianity.

Together with the warnings about the perils which might originate from personal contacts with non-Christians (warnings which emphasized the moral and pragmatic justifications for their social and political segregation), a number of rigid prohibitions to establish different types of contacts were sometimes imposed on individuals belonging to the same Muslim community. The miracle which happened at the Virgin's shrine in Salas, where a Muslim woman carried her dead child, asking the Virgin Mary to bring him back to life, is revealing. The Muslim protagonist of the miracle stands out for her devoutness to the Holy Lady, which made her scornful of the threats to which she was subjected, when the other women of her community tried to dissuade her from making the pilgrimage to the Christian shrine. Despite the psychological pressure that the other Muslim women placed on this devoted mother, she continued addressing them as *amigas*. Obviously the denomination was used conventionally, being a standard formula adopted to define all the people linked by 'natural friendship', that is to say members of the same ethnic and religious community sharing, in most cases, the same geographical and social life-space.<sup>87</sup>

Like the Muslim woman protagonist of the aforementioned *CSM* 167, there are other examples which prove that the denomination of friend was frequently used as a conventional label for people sharing the same social, religious or ethnic backgrounds. *CSM* 329, for instance, narrates the miracle

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*Arquitectura mudéjar en Castilla y León* (Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 1993); Robert Ousterhout and D. Fairchild Ruggles, 'Encounters with Islam: The Medieval Mediterranean Experience: Art, Material Culture, and Cultural Interchange', *Gesta*, 43 (2004): pp. 83–5.

<sup>87</sup> *CSM* 167, lines 17–18.



which happened during the Muslim conquest of the lands around Tudia, when some Muslim soldiers collected a great deal of booty and deposited part of it on the Virgin Mary's altar. As soon as they left the church, one of them lingered inside and stole the offerings. Divine punishment was inflicted on him and he was suddenly blinded and paralysed. The reactions of the other Muslims deserve attention. In the beginning, they supported their companion, believing that he had been captured by the Christians. However, once they discovered his involvement in the robbery, not only did they refuse to protect the betrayer, but they even began spreading the word of what had happened, making both his offence and the consequent miracle acknowledged among the Christians. These events proved that, even amidst Muslim companions, the *sine qua non* conditions which would guarantee certain solidarity were either the threat imposed by external enemies (which would generate the so-called 'friendships in arms'), or the loyalty which was required to anybody who wanted to be entitled as friend. Therefore, there was no spirit of community which could protect or rescue individuals who did not respect these fundamental rules and, most of all, who lacked personal virtues. In other words, common religious and ethnic roots could not, by themselves, guarantee the existence and survival of any friendship. The Muslim soldiers, protagonists of *CSM 329*, behaved according to these rules and, in fact, once they discovered the misdeed committed by their companion, they did not hesitate to reveal it to everybody. Additional reasons behind their gesture might be that they sought Holy favours and tried to avoid any kind of supernatural punishment. The message conveyed by this miracle-story is unequivocal: neither religious nor communitarian brotherhoods constituted safe shelters for those accused of treachery and bad will, above all if they acted dissolutely against either secular or spiritual powers.

### *Jewish Stereotypes: An Anti-Model of Friendship*

During the reign of Alfonso X and already before his time, Jews occupied important positions at court, thanks to their knowledge, and financial and administrative skills.<sup>88</sup> They participated actively in the affairs of the realm and contributed to the translation of numerous scientific and literary works, particularly in Toledo. However, even though they were respected as 'People

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<sup>88</sup> Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, trans. Louis Schoffman (2 vols, Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1992), I, pp. 111–37, 186–242.

of the Book', they were still considered evil-doers and unreliable individuals on whom Christians should keep a close eye.<sup>89</sup>

The image emerging from the Alfonsine works reflects the norms diffused after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.<sup>90</sup> Even though it was believed that Jews might be endowed with some individual qualities and virtues (although rare and usually related to their closeness or conversion to Christianity), they were still regarded as subjects that should not be trusted as friends. For this reason even the law forbade any close contact with them.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, money and material profits were regarded as keywords to de-codify Jewish mentality and behaviour. The Jewish protagonist of *CSM* 25, for example, embodies the stereotype of a false friend, behaving amicably only to obtain material benefits. The poem tells of a Christian man who, after having spent all his resources praiseworthily, had to recur to a Jewish moneylender.<sup>92</sup> The Jew accepted the deal, although he asked for some security in return, planning already to make a profit out of his loan. To achieve his goal, the Jew needed to secure the Christian's allegiance first. Perhaps for this reason, he sought to emphasize the amicable bond between them adopting the terminology of friendship to secure the other's trust (lines 23–26). The Christian, forced by necessity, accepted the terms of

<sup>89</sup> Jerry R. Craddock, *The Legislative Works of Alfonso X, el Sabio: A Critical Bibliography* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1986), pp. 3, 25, 27, 55–57, 123, 148–49, 355, 401, 444, 512. On the origin and development of conflict between Christians and Jews see: Enrique Cantera Montenegro, 'Judíos medievales. Convivencia y persecución', in *Tópicos y realidades de la Edad Media*, ed. Eloy Benito Ruano (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2002), pp. 179–252; Vikki Hatton and Angus MacKay, 'Anti-Semitism in the *Cantigas de Santa María*', *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 61 (1983): pp. 189–99; Emilio Mitre Fernández, *Judaísmo y Cristianismo. Raíces de un gran conflicto histórico* (Madrid: Istmo, 1980); James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue. A Study on the Origins of Antisemitism* (New York: JPS, 1974).

<sup>90</sup> David Romano, 'Los Judíos y Alfonso X', *Revista de Occidente*, 43 (1984): pp. 203–17, at pp. 204–5. On anti-Jewish ideas in Medieval Spain see Lucy Pick, *Conflict and Coexistence: Archbishop Rodrigo and the Muslims and Jews of Medieval Spain* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), pp. 172–73, 177–78; Luis Suárez Fernández, 'Claves históricas del problema judío en la España medieval', in *El legado material hispanojudío. VII Curso de Cultura Hispanojudia y Sefardi de la Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha*, ed. Ana M. López Álvarez and Ricardo Izquierdo Benito (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1998), pp. 15–76, at p. 16.

<sup>91</sup> An entire title is dedicated to the Jews and their exchanges with Christians in *SP* VII:XXIV.

<sup>92</sup> Joseph Shatzmiller, *Shylock Reconsidered: Jews, Moneylending and Medieval Society* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1990); Julio Caro Baroja, *Los judíos en la España Moderna y Contemporánea*, 2nd edn (3 vols, Madrid: Istmo, 1978), I, p. 104.

the agreement since it was the only chance for him to save his business. But the day came in which he had to discharge his debt. Since he was not in Byzantium (where the agreement had been signed), he put the money that he owed to the moneylender in a basket and threw it in the sea, entrusting it to the Virgin Mary. When the basket reached the shore, a servant of the Jew's failed to grasp it, but the moneylender himself, chiding him, seized the basket and hid the treasure:

... E mui bien  
se guardou de seus conpanheiros  
que non ll' ouvessen d'entender  
de como os el ascondia ... (Lines 124–27)<sup>93</sup>

[... He kept it a secret  
from his friends so that they would not know  
how he hid the money from them ...]

The Jew's behaviour in this situation contradicts a fundamental principle of friendship: the pleasure of sharing goods and benefits with friends. Even in the *SP* we find a title on the value of sharing, considered fundamental for the existence of any community and regarded as the root of individual happiness (*SP* IV:XXVII:II). By accepting this proposition, it is not unreasonable to assert that the stereotyped Jewish protagonist of *CSM* 25 embodied the anti-model of any good friend. In this *cantiga* it seems that the general warnings against the Jews (a clear expression of the widespread religious prejudices towards them) contributed, along with the Virgin Mary's intervention, to save the Christian merchant. In fact, the Christian's attitude towards the Jew was extremely detached; for instance, he never used the title *amigo* to address him, while the other adopted this term abundantly, although, as the events would prove, treacherously.

Another interesting consideration emerges from the analysis of *CSM* 348, whose protagonist is Alfonso X himself. The Virgin Mary appeared to the King in a dream, revealing to him where a great treasure had been buried by its Jewish owners. Alfonso's attempt to find those resources was unsuccessful until one year later when, during his campaign against Granada, he discovered the hidden treasure. The description of the Jewish owners reads as follows:

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<sup>93</sup> *CSM* 25.

... e mostrou-lle d'outra parte | a Virgen grandes tesouros

...

De prata, d'our' e de pedras | mui ricas e mui preçadas,  
e panos muitos de seda | e çitaras ben lavradas  
e outras dôas mui nobres | de prata, todas douradas,  
dos judeos, seus êemigos, | a que quer peor ca mouros. (Lines 44–48)<sup>94</sup>

[... the Virgin showed him great treasures in another place  
... of silver, gold, rich and precious stones,  
much cloth of silk, beautifully worked tapestries,  
and other very noble objects of gilded silver  
which belonged to the Jews, Her enemies, whom She hates more than the Moors.]

Admittedly, this recalls the statement of the *SP*, according to which Jews were considered worse than Muslims and perhaps they were even feared more, being considered far more influential from economic, social and cultural points of view.

The didactic warnings conveyed through the Alfonsine works were the result of widespread beliefs according to which no individual virtue could redeem a Jewish betrayer, whose only chance of salvation was conversion. *CSM* 107 provides an interesting case in point. The miracle is about a Jewish woman, named Marisaltos, who was accused of a crime (perhaps of sexual nature) and for this reason she was thrown from a cliff by the other members of her Jewish community. However, the Virgin Mary's merciful intervention, after hearing her prayers, saved her. The positive description of Marisaltos is quite surprising, unless we read this event as the first step leading to her conversion to Christianity.<sup>95</sup>

All these examples suggest that the images emerging from the Alfonsine production reflected the existence of deep-rooted stereotypes, which in the thirteenth century developed even more powerfully than before.<sup>96</sup> As Julio Caro Baroja argued, there were four main elements according to which Jews were recognized, classified and consequently treated: religious, psychological, economic and physical factors.<sup>97</sup> In the Alfonsine production two of these elements featured more predominantly. First, the religious motif; Jews were considered guilty of deicide and condemnable for the cruelties that, under

<sup>94</sup> *CSM* 348.

<sup>95</sup> Mirrer, *Women, Jews, and Muslims*, pp. 31–44.

<sup>96</sup> Albert I. Bagby Jr, 'The Jews in the *Cantigas* of Alfonso el Sabio', *Speculum*, 46 (1971): pp. 670–88; Albert I. Bagby Jr, 'Alfonso X, el sabio compara moros y judíos', *Romanische Forschungen*, 82 (1970): pp. 578–83.

<sup>97</sup> Baroja, *Los judíos en España*, I, p. 104.

the façade of rituality, they supposedly committed against Christians and all those who had abjured their faith.<sup>98</sup> Second, there were evident psychological characteristics, which were considered common to any Jewish person, such as *soberbia* (sense of pride), avarice and disloyalty towards others, including those fraudulently dubbed by them as *amigos*.

## The Case of the Heretics and Other Christian Enemies

Commonly judged as cruel, malicious and worthless, heretics were regarded as individuals with whom any personal and social relationships were forbidden and there was no sign of sympathy for them. *CSM* 175, for instance, narrates the story of a young boy, falsely accused by the heretic owner of an inn where he was staying with his father, on their route to Santiago. Once the pilgrims discovered that the inn was owned by a heretic they wished to leave, but the heretic planned to take revenge on them by hiding a silver cup among the boy's possessions, leaving him to be accused and hanged for his supposed robbery.<sup>99</sup> Needless to say that for evil heretics like him there was no space for redemption, not even when they converted by abjuring their false beliefs publicly. An example of this is *CSM* 208, about a heretic who, after hiding a consecrated host in his mouth and then spitting it into his orchard, witnessed a miracle performed by the Holy Mary, who transformed a hive of bees into a chapel containing an altar and a statue dedicated to her. Having witnessed such a wondrous event, the heretic went to the bishop, confessed his sins and begged for divine pardon. However, there is

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<sup>98</sup> For a broader Western European overview see: Mark Koyama, 'The Political Economy of Expulsion: The Regulation of Jewish Moneylending in Medieval England', *Constitutional Political Economy*, 21 (2010): pp. 374–406; Robin R. Mundill, *The King's Jews: Money, Massacre and Exodus in Medieval England* (London: Continuum, 2010); Julia Barrow, 'Jewish Communities', in *The Central Middle Ages: Europe, 950–1320*, ed. Dan Power (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 145–47; Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Robin R. Mundill, *England's Jewish Solution: Experiment and Expulsion, 1262–1290* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John M. McCulloh, 'Jewish Ritual Murder: William of Norwich, Thomas of Monmouth, and the Early Dissemination of the Myth', *Speculum*, 72 (1997): pp. 698–740; Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-century Renaissance* (London: Routledge, 1995); Anna Sapir Abulafia, 'Jewish Carnality in Twelfth-century Renaissance Thought', *Studies in Church History*, 29 (1992): pp. 59–75; Robert I. Moore, 'Anti-Semitism and the Birth of Europe', *Studies in Church History*, 29 (1992): pp. 33–57; Sophia Menache, 'Faith, Myth and Politics: The Stereotype of the Jews and their Expulsion from England and France', *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 75 (1985): pp. 351–74.

<sup>99</sup> *CSM* 175.

no reference in the miracle suggesting that the Jew was subsequently welcomed by the rest of the Christian community.

This could be better understood when considering that any interaction between Christians and heretics were also strictly forbidden by the law, which provided a list of punishments and penalties for both heretics and those who helped, sustained or sheltered them:

Et de los hereges de qualquier manera que sean viene muy grant daño á la tierra; ca se trabajan siempre de corromper las voluntades de los homes et de meterlos en yerro.<sup>100</sup>

[Great injury results to a country from heretics of every description, for they constantly endeavour to corrupt the minds of men and cause them to err.]

Those who did not respect the law and helped heretics or listened to their false preaching risked accusation, loss of their titles, personal riches and inheritance and, in some cases, even excommunication and banishment (*SP VII:XXV:V–VI*).

Heretics, Muslims and Jews were subjected to strong practical and moral restrictions, but so were Christians, at least in specific circumstances. In trying to provide a complete overview, while demystifying the stereotypes of evil Muslims, Jews and heretics, the controversial descriptions given of certain Christian characters deserve some attention. In *CSM* 379, for example, not only did the Muslim protagonists behave honestly and loyally, but they were themselves victims of Christian evil-doers. A crew of Catalan pirates attacked the ships of merchants directed to Santa María del Puerto, where the latter had been invited and reassured of protection by Alfonso X. The Catalan pirates attacked, among others, one of the ships belonging to some Muslim merchants, stealing all their goods and capturing some of the crew members. By behaving in this way, the pirates showed their total lack of respect for those travellers (whatever their ethnic or religious origins might be) and for the Virgin Mary, who was entitled to protect the sea. This example clearly shows that if, on the one hand, Jews and Muslims were generally depicted as evil-doers, on the other hand Christians who did not respect the established rules were not exempt from condemnation either. Neither their faith nor their ethnic background constituted sufficient guarantees of their personal reliability and honesty. In the specific case of *CSM* 379, the Catalan pirates did not show any sign of companionship towards the other Christian merchants sailing there, and not even among the other sailors

<sup>100</sup> *SP VII:XXVI:I*.

enlisted in their own crew. Reading between the lines, one might suspect that such a deceitful picture of the Catalan pirates was due to the fact that they represented the branch of a real political competitor for Castile – the kingdom of Aragon – which was an antagonistic force, despite the political alliance bolstered by Alfonso X's own marriage with James I's daughter, Violante.

In the Alfonsine narrations there is a total lack of examples referring to pure and disinterested friendships between members of different religious communities and sometimes even among those belonging to the same group. The absence of such examples might be considered the outcome of the rigid prohibitions imposed by the law. However, it also mirrored widespread beliefs according to which pure amicable relationships between people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds were nearly impossible to establish. The language of friendship represents a further proof of this, since it was essentially used to indicate pragmatic alliances, rather than emotional and personal links. As discussed in Chapter 4, interfaith relationships were predominantly political and military alliances. This might explain why, in Alfonso X's works, Muslims were portrayed in a positive light whenever they represented a source of manpower, which could be employed in Christian military campaigns. By contrast, such an ambivalent representation did not apply to heretics, who were regarded as being religiously and socially beyond the pale. Similarly, Jews received a negative treatment, as they were militarily irrelevant, although financially crucial and extremely influential – and therefore dangerous if not kept under control – in the economic and intellectual spheres.



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# Friendship, Sex and Gender Relationships

## Multiple Definitions of *Amigo*

Sexuality and gender played influential roles in the relationships conventionally defined as friendships.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not in the Alfonsine production there are examples of friendships between subjects of the opposite sexes, and to what extent those links were socially, legally and morally accepted are intriguing questions worth exploring. For a long time the terminology adopted to define both love and friendship coincided, as the term 'love' indicated both the relationships between individuals of either the same or the opposite sexes. Poetry contributed to differentiate such categories.<sup>2</sup> In fact, while in the beginning the titles *amigo/a* were used to address and define individuals experiencing any form of affection, from the twelfth century onwards such definitions acquired new sentimental hues.<sup>3</sup>

In a number of cases, marriage was also defined through the lexicon of friendship, following the Holy Scriptures (according to which Adam and Eve were created together to be companions) and St Ambrose, who later defined marital relations as bonds sought by God in order to join men and women both physically and spiritually.<sup>4</sup> The language of friendship easily adapted to marriage,

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<sup>1</sup> Cristina Segura Graño, 'Participación de las mujeres en el poder político', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 25 (1995): pp. 449–62. See also Reyna Pastor de Togneri, 'Sombras y luces en la historia de las mujeres medievales', in *Tópicos y realidades de la Edad Media*, ed. Eloy Benito Ruano (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 2002), pp. 179–229.

<sup>2</sup> A number of scholars attributed to William IX of Aquitaine (1071–1127) the paternity of such a secularly definition of female–male love. See, for example, Klaus Oschema, 'Reflections on Love and Friendship in the Middle Ages', in *Love, Friendship and Faith in Europe, 1300–1800*, ed. Laura Gowing, Michael Hunter and Miri Rubin (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 43–65, at p. 52.

<sup>3</sup> William D. Paden, 'Principles of Generic Classification in the Medieval European Lyric: The Case of Galician-Portuguese', *Speculum*, 81 (2006): pp. 76–97, at pp. 91–97; Rüdiger Schnell, *Sexualität und Emotionalität in der vormodernen Ehe* (Cologne, Vienna and Weimar: Böhlau, 2002), p. 471, cited by Oschema, 'Reflections on Love', p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> Ambrose's idea is compared with Cicero's and the Stoics' doctrines, but also with Aristotle's idea of benevolence, which was in fact antithetic to the Stoics'. Eoin G. Cassidy,

originally considered a link based on love (glossed as *dilectio*) and respect.<sup>5</sup> During the Middle Ages, marriage regulated dynastic and social structures, as well as women's identities, whenever the latter were not already defined within the cloister.<sup>6</sup> Those who remained widows, for example, were married off by their families or by their lords to powerful men (possibly their own vassals), as this would safeguard the ladies' reputations while offering the opportunity of profitable alliances to those who arranged such unions.

The highly pragmatic value of marriage did not exclude the possibility of experiencing different types of love: from companionship in sharing the difficulties and pleasures of life, benevolence and familiar affection to mutual trust. For this reason, marriage, friendship and companionship were frequently intertwined and they formed the basis of complex networks extremely intricate to disentangle. In *SP IV:II:I*, *amicitia* is defined as the foundation of marriage: a sacrament aimed at preserving man from lust in order to assure his descendants.<sup>7</sup> Marriage was legally defined as a moral, social, institutional and personal bond.<sup>8</sup> The fundamental requirement to guarantee its duration and to confirm its authenticity was loyalty. Women especially had to prove it to preserve their honour and that of their lords, as well as to guarantee the legitimacy of their

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'He Who Has Friends Can Have No Friend: Classical and Christian Perspectives on the Limits to Friendship', in *Friendship in Medieval Europe*, ed. Julian Haseldine (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1999), pp. 45–67.

<sup>5</sup> Georges Duby, *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Dunnett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 95–101. Sexual relationships would imply a hierarchical structure within the couple, as the woman would be reverentially submitted to her master-husband.

<sup>6</sup> Maria Isabel Pérez de Tudela y Velasco, 'La mujer castellano-leonesa del pleno medioevo. Perfiles literarios, estatutos jurídico y situación económica', in *Las mujeres medievales y su ámbito jurídico: actas de las II Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria*, ed. Cristina Segura Graiño (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1983), pp. 59–77.

<sup>7</sup> *SP IV*, preamble.

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Lansing, 'The Thirteenth Century Legal Attitude toward Woman in Spain', *PMLA*, 36 (1921): pp. 492–507. The *SP* (as also recognized by the customary law) distinguished between marriage *de bendicion*, *de juras* and the *barraganía*, respectively official marriage; legitimate marriage which was kept secret; and an indefinite bond which was not strengthened by any official ritual, although the involved parties remained faithful to one another. On *barraganía* see also Francisco Martínez Marina, *Ensayo histórico-crítico sobre la legislación y principales cuerpos legales de los reinos de León y Castilla especialmente sobre el código de las Siete Partidas de D. Alfonso el Sabio*, 2nd edn (Madrid: [n. pub.], 1834; Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes; Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional, 2005), I:VI, pp. 262–63.

offspring, without which no material and dynastic inheritance would be possible to transmit.<sup>9</sup>

What is intriguing is that the polysemous terms *amigo/a* referred to loyal and wise husbands and wives, but also to illegitimate lovers. Moreover, there were other female–male bonds which, although lacking any explicit reference to friendship, in reality developed and were experienced as such.

## Female–Male Connections in Law, Literature and History

Apart from marriage and concubinage, the only relationships permitted and widely accepted between representatives of the opposite sexes – at least in the works under examination – were blood ties and links based on a certain grade of familiarity, since those were regarded as indispensable parameters to prevent the risk of sexual intercourse between the involved parties. The lexicon of friendship sometimes appears to define ambiguous connections in which women – particularly mothers, sisters and, very rarely, wives – were involved. The *EE* provides numerous examples. Chapter 172, for instance, recounts how Emperor Nero, physically attracted to his own mother, chose a concubine who clearly resembled her.<sup>10</sup> Nero's mistress is named *amiga* despite the fact that the nature of their bond was merely sexual rather than emotional. Similarly, *EE* 181 recounts how Vitellius (d.69 AD) grew up among Emperor Tiberius (d.37 AD)'s *amigas* (courtesans playing here the role of tutors) and how that womanly environment corrupted him deeply. The fact that women frequently exerted a malevolent influence over young creatures in their childhood and adolescence (irrespective of the children's genders) was highly feared as a threat to the righteous development of their young and still fragile personalities.

Moreover, any relationship involving women was generally regarded as extremely unstable. Only on a few occasions was a woman rescued from the limbo in which she was segregated by prejudice, and that could happen when she was bonded in a marital relation or constrained by blood ties. Mothers represent a good instance of this. An eloquent episode appears in chapter IV of the *Calila et Dimna*, a gnomic collection with which the scribes working in the Alfonsine scriptorium were certainly familiar.<sup>11</sup> The protagonist of this story

<sup>9</sup> Pastor de Togneri, 'Sombras y luces', pp. 179–229, at p. 193.

<sup>10</sup> ... and he took as his concubine one of those women who are brought from place to place, one who looked like his mother, and he made her equal to all the others that he had already got. *EE* 172.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter 1, pp. 31–34, 38.

is the lion king's mother, who behaved astonishingly loyally by not revealing the identity of the person who told her about the treachery that Dimna was carrying out against her son's trustworthy friend, Sançeba. She played the role of wise counsellor, warning her son against the falseness of his envious vassal, Dimna. One might imagine that the loyalty of the king's mother was directly inspired by her maternal love; however, the fact that her actions towards those who did not belong to her close family were equally exemplary gives us a hint of her moral stature. Yet, she was an exception. In fact, her privileged status allowed her to stand on a position of semi-equality with the king; a position to which not everybody could aspire.

This example confirms that representations of women varied according to their social positions.<sup>12</sup> In the Alfonsine works, female friends involved in a non-sexual relationship were usually noble ladies linked by blood ties to their male companions. Mothers, daughters and sisters were sometimes allowed to play such a role if endowed with sufficient wisdom, intelligence and moral education to behave righteously.<sup>13</sup> Among the numerous models which came down to us through history, literature and legend, the figures of Jimena, El Cid's wife, and Sancha of Navarre, Fernán González's pragmatic and dynamic consort, are two significant, and at the same time antithetical, examples.<sup>14</sup>

In the *EE*, Jimena is described as a passive character until her husband's death, when she finally stands out, giving dispositions about how to bury her beloved consort. Being supportive and, above all, submissive and obedient, Jimena embodied all the characteristics conventionally required of a good wife.

<sup>12</sup> This is also Reyna Pastor de Togneri's view, although in her study she focuses more on the *mujeres populares* (women of lower ranks). Reyna Pastor de Togneri, 'Para una historia social de la mujer hispano-medieval. Problemática y puntos de vista', in *La condición de la mujer en la Edad Media, actas del coloquio celebrado en la Casa Velázquez, 5-7 noviembre 1984*, ed. Yves-René Fonquerne and Alfonso Esteban (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, Universidad Complutense, 1986), pp. 187-214. For an interesting comparison see Isabel Beceiro Pita, 'La mujer noble en la Baja Edad Media', in *La condición de la mujer en la Edad Media, actas del coloquio celebrado en la Casa Velázquez, 5-7 noviembre 1984*, ed. Yves-René Fonquerne and Alfonso Esteban (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, Universidad Complutense, 1986), pp. 289-314; José Enrique Ruiz Domenec, 'La mujer en la sociedad aristocrática de los siglos XII y XIII', in *La condición de la mujer en la Edad Media, actas del coloquio celebrado en la Casa Velázquez, 5-7 noviembre 1984*, ed. Yves-René Fonquerne and Alfonso Esteban (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, Universidad Complutense, 1986), pp. 379-402.

<sup>13</sup> See for example *EE* 10, as discussed in Antonella Liuzzo Scorpo, 'La idea del poder en la Península Ibérica en la Edad Media: perspectivas universales y particulares en la General Estoria y la Estoria de España', *Studia Historica, Historia Medieval*, 29 (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca, 2011): pp. 23-50, at pp. 41-42.

<sup>14</sup> Perez de Tudela y Velasco, 'La mujer castellano-leonesa', pp. 63-66.

Perhaps for this reason El Cid of the *EE* seemed to trust her completely. For instance, when Gil Díaz, the Muslim *alfaqui* (master of law) of Valencia, abjured his false beliefs and expressed his desire to convert to Christianity, El Cid felt the need to share his enthusiasm with Jimena, entrusting her to do everything to make this happen:

Quando esto oyo el Çid Ruy Diaz, ouo tan grant plazer, que començo a reyr; et mando llamar a donna Ximena, et dixol: ‘hermana, vedes aqui el mio alcaide que quiere seer cristiano et seer nuestro hermano en la ley de Jhesus Cristo; agora ruegouos que uos plega et mandades guysar todas las cosas que son mester pora esto’. Quando esto oyo donna Ximena, ouo muy grant plazer, et guysolo todo muy noblemente.<sup>15</sup>

[When El Cid, Rodrigo Diaz, heard it, he was so pleased that he started laughing; and he summoned Jimena and told her: ‘sister, look, my governor wants to convert to Christianity and he wants to be our brother in the name of the law of Jesus Christ; now, I ask for your help to arrange everything we need to do in order to make this possible’. When Jimena heard it, she was very pleased and organized everything magnanimously.]

The title of *hermana* (sister) here replaced the appellation of *amiga* which, even though referring to regular wives, had sexual implications which, in the case of El Cid and Jimena, were underplayed in order to emphasize, instead, the central role occupied by their honourable and noble feelings, which they nurtured as good Christian believers.

Unlike Jimena, in the *EE* the Countess Sancha of Navarre is depicted since the beginning as an active woman, who knitted the threads of an elaborate plot to rescue her lover, Fernán González, from his imprisonment. She asked permission to see her jailed lover and, as soon as she saw him in chains, she did not hesitate to mention in front of the sovereign – with a euphemism not very difficult to disclose – that they could not have any intimacy if the Count was not freed from his chains:

La condesa enuio luego dezir al rey quel rogaua mucho, como a sennor bueno et mesurado, que mandasse sacar al conde de los fierros, diziendol que el caualllo trauado nunca bien podie fazer fijos.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *EE* 951.

<sup>16</sup> *EE* 718.

[The Countess sent a message to the king, praying him as a good and wise lord, to free the Count from his chains, telling him that a restrained horse cannot generate any offspring.]

Differently from the situation involving Jimena, the sexual attraction between Sancha and Fernán González allowed him to address her as *amiga* or *sennora*, but never with the semantically chaste title of *hermana*.<sup>17</sup>

These examples suggest that in the Alfonsine chronicles women who were regarded as trustworthy friends usually belonged to the same family or to the closest circles of the men to whom they were linked. Nonetheless, family ties did not necessarily guarantee that women acted as loyal friends and advisors. *EE* 4 is a case in point. The chronicle narrates how Jupiter was malevolently advised by his wife, Juno, who gave her love and part of her properties to a neighbouring ruler, Euristeo, who, in return, promised to raise her foster son, Hercules. Not only was Juno unreliable, despite the fact that she was Jupiter's wife and a goddess herself, but she was also particularly dangerous, as she adopted her power for deplorable purposes.

The fact that blood ties were not always guarantees of genuine personal friendships is also emphasized in *EE* 764, which narrates how Count Sancho Garcia of Castile's mother tried to kill her own son to marry, afterwards, the Muslim King Almanzor (d.1002).<sup>18</sup> Not even maternal love could calm her implacable thirst for power. What is noteworthy is that the same chapter of the *EE* recounts that another woman, who was just a humble servant, behaved much more loyally towards the King by revealing the Queen's treacherous plan. Unfortunately, the exemplarity of this other woman was only superficial since her motivation was the devotion that she nurtured for one of the King's squires. Therefore, the servant did not betray her lady inspired by a strong sense of moral justice, but simply because she was pursuing a personal goal, that is to say conquering the squire's love. In the end, the only person who behaved as a proper friend towards his lord was his squire, who was a loyal subject and, above all, a man: 'el escudero dixolo al conde su sennor, et conseiol commo se guardase

<sup>17</sup> The case of Sancha will be examined again in the following section about the lexicon of friendship, see pp. 186–87.

<sup>18</sup> Francisco Bautista, 'Pseudo-historia y leyenda en la historiografía medieval: la Condesa Traidora', in *El relato historiográfico: textos y tradiciones en la España medieval*, ed. Francisco Bautista (London: Department of Hispanic Studies, Queen Mary, University of London, 2006), pp. 59–101.



de aquella traycion'.<sup>19</sup> In all likelihood, however, the squire's loyalty was dictated by his personal ambition to gain some material rewards.<sup>20</sup>

Customary and legal practices represented another limitation for women, particularly in medieval Spain. First of all, even if women were allowed to inherit and keep their own possessions, which were administered by their fathers first and by their husbands later, the same right of inheritance was not valid for honorific titles and fiefs.<sup>21</sup> Second, royal rewards were usually proportionate to the military support and services that the beneficiaries could directly provide to the king and in most cases women were unable to satisfy these kinds of military requests. Moreover, not only were women denied the possibility to claim official positions, to obtain booty and to inherit an estate *in toto*, but there were circumstances in which they were themselves offered as rewards for allies or as part of the booty donated to the enemies.<sup>22</sup> *EE* 605 explores one of those cases, by narrating how Mauregatus of Asturias (r. 783–88) gave the young *donzellas fijas dalgo* (young noble girls) to the Muslims that he wanted to keep as allies, leaving the girls at their mercy.

Except for a few cases in which women were presented in a positive light, above all when their noble lineage allowed them to establish friendly interactions with their male counterparts or when they were blessed with the Holy Grace, in most cases they were portrayed as sinful and corrupted creatures, constantly tempting men's virtues. In the Alfonsine works women were frequently catalogued either as malevolent and vicious, or as fragile individuals, politically powerless and sometimes too naïve to be trusted as friends and guardians of someone else's secrets.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, according to *EE* 612, King Alfonso II (r.1164–96), dubbed 'the Chaste', decided not to have any female company during his entire life. The same negative attitude emerges from the law (*SP* IV:XI:III), which

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<sup>19</sup> The squire referred it to his lord, the Count, and he advised him on how to protect himself from such treachery. *EE* 764.

<sup>20</sup> *EE* 764.

<sup>21</sup> Heath Dillard, *Daughters of the Reconquest: Women in Castilian Town Society, 1100–1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Simon Barton, *The Aristocracy in Twelfth-Century León and Castile* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 38–46.

<sup>22</sup> S.Barton, *Conquerors, Brides, and Concubines: Interfaith Relations and Social Power in Medieval Iberia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming 2015)

<sup>23</sup> The fables of the *Calila et Dimna*, mentioned before, also present a wide array of examples displaying those extremes. See for example *Calila e Dimna*, ed. Juan M. Cacho Bleuca and Maria J. Lacarra (Madrid: Castalia, 1984), pp. 253–62, 337–51. For a positive example, see instead *Sendebat*, ed. Lacarra (Madrid: Cátedra, 1996), pp. 148–53.

described women as naturally greedy, avaricious and, therefore, untruthful.<sup>24</sup> There seemed to be a shared moral code according to which very rarely, and only under established conditions, women were openly recognized as friends, while not even Alfonso X's enlightened circles escaped the widespread misogynous influence which characterized his era.<sup>25</sup>

### Friendships between Women

Considering the paucity of circumstances in which women were allowed to establish non-marital relationships with men, one might wonder whether contacts between women were more likely to occur. In reality, this was not necessarily the case, since the social circles that women were allowed to access were limited, above all for those who did not belong to the upper strata. In the few cases in which female *compannas* (groups) were allowed to form, they had to take place in separate contexts from where men gathered, with the very few exceptions of companies of pilgrims and meetings at the royal court:

... de ssa conpanna jogavan ant' a Majestade  
dados omees e molleres, com' é usança ...<sup>26</sup>

[ ... men and women of his company were playing dice before the holy statue (of the Virgin Mary),  
as is their custom ...]

CSM 383 tells about the pilgrimage of a lady from Sigüenza to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, which she decided to undertake together with her daughter, who was the best company she could find and trust:

<sup>24</sup> EE 612. See also Liuzzo Scorpo, 'La idea del poder', pp. 41 and 45–46.

<sup>25</sup> An interesting exception is the image of the Virgin Mary, model of maternal love, as presented in the CSM. Ana Domínguez Rodríguez, 'Imágenes de la mujer en las Cantigas de Santa María', in *La imagen de la mujer en el arte español: actas de las terceras Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria* (Madrid, 1983), ed. María Angeles Durán (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1990), pp. 29–42; Pérez de Tudela y Velasco, 'El tratamiento de la mujer en las *Cantigas de Santa María*', in *La condición de la mujer en la Edad Media, actas del coloquio celebrado en la Casa Velázquez, 5–7 noviembre 1984*, ed. Yves-René Fonquerne and Alfonso Esteban (Madrid: Casa de Velásquez, Universidad Complutense, 1986), pp. 51–74.

<sup>26</sup> CSM 136, lines 20–21.

... foy-sse logo sa carreya  
e levou sigo sa filla | por que non fosse senlleira,  
ca achar non poderia | pera ssi tal companneira.<sup>27</sup>

[... the woman set out on her way  
and took her daughter with her so that she would not be alone,  
for she could not find a better companion.]

Familial bonds were regarded as some of the most reliable links that women could establish in a society in which they were often submitted to male authority. Religion and shared devotional practices also played a fundamental role, as they constituted cohesive elements, which could favour the formation of female companies. An interesting case is recorded in *EE* 956, which describes the formation of a Muslim female army, which led their attack against the city of Valencia.<sup>28</sup> These Muslim women fought side by side in the name of their common faith and they strengthened a real friendship in arms, which resembled (for the few details we are given in this passage of the chronicle) all the peculiarities of any other military agreement between men. The events narrated in *EE* 1054 offer an interesting case for comparison. Here the protagonist is Álvaro Pérez's wife, who was left alone with her household while her husband went to Toledo to offer King Ferdinand III his aid on the frontier territories. Taking advantage of that situation, Ibn Ahmar, King of Arjona (r.1252–73), and successively King of Granada, threatened the countess in Martos. The lady reacted heroically, defending herself and her company, supported by the other women who were at her service. She incited them to abandon their female customs and to embrace the weapons to defend their lives and their land. Like the female Muslim army of *EE* 956, this women's company also forged a bond of loyalty both among them and with their lady to protect the land of which they were naturals. The main

<sup>27</sup> *CSM* 383, lines 21–23.

<sup>28</sup> Elena Lourie, 'Black Women Warriors in the Muslim Army Besieging Valencia and the Cid's Victory: A Problem of Interpretation', *Traditio*, 55 (2000): pp. 181–209; Josemi Lorenzo Arribas, 'Tampoco acariciaron banderas: apuntes críticos sobre las mujeres y la guerra medieval', in *Las mujeres y las guerras: el papel de las mujeres en las guerras de la edad antigua a la contemporánea*, ed. Mary Nash and Susanna Tavera (Barcelona: Icaria, 2003), pp. 83–95. Arribas discusses the legendary case of the women which saved both the city of Toledo and Queen Berenguela from the Moorish attack by playing music which enchanted the Moors and stopped them. Significantly, those women did not use any violence or coercive means, but they rather adopted their mediation skills, symbolized by the musical instruments. This episode is also narrated in Book II of *Chronica Adefonsi Imperatoris*, ed. Antonio Mayasánchez, in *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Medievalis*, LXXI (Brepols: Turnhout, 1990), pp. 109–248.

difference between the two episodes consists of the fact that the association of Christian women reacted to defend themselves from an external attack, while the Muslim warriors of *EE* 956 are described as driven by aggressive purposes.

Except for the associations between women established in the name of their common national and religious identities, there are no other instances of personal female friendships in the Alfonsine *corpus* examined in this study. Perhaps, that was due to the nature of this royal production, deeply influenced by literary *topoi* according to which women were considered extremely dangerous to trust in any peer relationships, unless a third person mediated such contacts and safeguarded the individuals involved. Once again, the only few exceptions were bonds established between and among honourable women, usually of high social status and linked to the other person by blood and family ties.

### Friendship and Sexual Relationships: A Question of Lexicon

When referring to female–male relationships, the lexicon of friendship assumes multiple meanings. To clarify this point, it would be useful to re-examine the case of Countess Sancha and Count Fernán González, already discussed in the previous section.<sup>29</sup> The *EE* remarks upon the fact that Sancha was a powerful woman, both for her personality and for her privileged social position. Chapter 710 narrates that she received the embassy of the Count of Lombardy, who told her about Fernán González's imprisonment and advised her of the necessity to free him, since this would otherwise favour Muslim attacks against his territories. After careful reflection on the Count of Lombardy's words, Sancha sent one of her maidens to check Fernán González's situation. In addressing her servant, Sancha adopted the appellation of *amiga*, a title which seems to be legitimized by the fact that the maiden was defending an important secret as a personal service to the Countess. Nevertheless, as their social disparity implied, the maiden replied reverentially by addressing the Countess as *sennora* (lady). After the first expedition undertaken by the servant to the castle where Fernán González was detained, Sancha herself went there:

Sennor, dixo ella, esto faze fazer el grand amor, ca esta es la cosa del mundo que mas tuelle a las duennas paura et uerguença de quantas cosas son; ca por los

<sup>29</sup> See pp. 180–82.

amigos tambien la mugier como el uaron oluida los padres et los parientes et a todas las cosas del mundo, ca de lo que se omne paga esso tiene por meior.<sup>30</sup>

[My lord, she said, this is what love produces, since this is the only thing in the world that can deprive women of fear and embarrassment; since for a lover, women, as well as men, forget their parents, families and all the things in the world, since what the other gives is considered better.]

The *amigos* to whom Sancha referred in her speech were all those who submitted themselves to passionate love, a feeling against which she expressed her warnings. Up to this point in the narration, the passion between Sancha and Fernán González had not reached its highest peak; for this reason they still addressed each other using the formulae of courtly love, including some denominations of undeniable vassallic reminiscence, such as *sennor/a*:

... quiero que me fagades pleyto et omenage en la mi mano que me tomedes por mugier et que casesdes comigo et non me dexedes por otra duenna ninguna.<sup>31</sup>

[ ... I want you to swear as an oath of homage that you take me as your lover, and that you will marry me and never leave me for any other woman.]

Sancha behaved as a female-liege and, in such a position, she also asked for an 'oath of love', which had to be respected by the Count if he did not want to incur dishonour or, in the worst case, death. Fernán González swore his love and loyalty with the awareness that, if he did not fulfil the terms of that agreement, he would be irremediably accused of treachery, paying the inevitable consequences of his actions.

EE 731 is another episode displaying further semantic combinations of the adopted language of love and friendship. Count Garcí Fernández married a French countess named Argentina, who abandoned him to follow, instead, a French nobleman. Overwhelmed by those humiliating events, Garcí Fernández decided to dress up as a mendicant and go to the shrine of the Virgin of Rocamadour. At the shrine there was also Sancha, daughter of the man who had taken Argentina as his wife. The girl was extremely disconcerted by her step-mother Argentina's behaviour and she revealed her frustration to one of her maidens (whom she addressed as *amiga*), expressing her desire to talk to

<sup>30</sup> EE 710.

<sup>31</sup> EE 710.

one of the poor who had come to her door, as she wanted to receive honest and disinterested advice. Among the crowd, the maiden noticed the beggar, who was indeed Count Garcí Fernández, whose bearing had attracted the woman, as he showed some kind of inner nobility. The Count, under his false identity, was introduced to Sancha and, once he revealed who he was, they married and joined forces in order to take revenge over both the French Count and Argentina. What is significant in this account is the peculiar use of the terms *amiga/o* and the way in which they were adopted differently according to the social status of the interlocutors who employed, or were addressed by, such titles. When the Count was hidden under his pilgrim's clothes, the maiden had dubbed him *amigo*; a customary way of addressing people of equal conditions with whom one may feel close or connected (in this case the servant thought that they shared the same social background). However, the register changed as soon as the condition of equality disappeared. The count-pilgrim instead, once he met lady Sancha, adopted the title of *sennora* for two main reasons: first, due to his pretended poor conditions, he had to follow a reverential code of behaviour, which also implied the adoption of certain formulae to address a lady from a higher social group. Second, since he was a nobleman, he adopted formulae dictated by conventional courtly manners. If that was not enough, another incontrovertible proof of the influence that social identities played on the use of a particular register is given by the fact that Sancha began by addressing Garcí Fernández as *amigo* when she thought that he was only a poor man, but she substituted it with *sennor* as soon as he revealed his true identity. Unlike the formulae exchanged between individuals from the lowest ranks (such as the maiden and the man that she mistook for a humble pilgrim), in the cases of relationships between noblewomen and noblemen, albeit arbitrarily classified as links between peers, the appellation of *amigo* was used only in specific circumstances; namely, in cases of legally recognized female–male relationships (which in some cases had strong sexual connotations); in situations which resembled the literary parameters of courtly love; to define bonds between family members or, as will be discussed later, when one of the parties acted as a tutor.

In particular, the term *amiga* assumed a positive meaning when marriage had been celebrated or any other regular union established. Only at that point, and if they behaved wisely, women could be addressed as friends. This is what happened, for example, to Sancha when she married Garcí Fernández, as recounted in *EE* 732:

Et esta condessa donna Sancha començo de primero a seer buena et atenerse con Dios et a seer amiga de so marido et fazer muchas buenas obras ...<sup>32</sup>

[And Countess Sancha, in the beginning behaved correctly and respected God and acted as a good friend of her husband and she did many good things ...]

Significantly, their harmonious marital-friendship did not last very long, since Sancha's amorous feelings towards her husband suddenly turned into hatred. In fact, her malevolent, fickle and untrustworthy female nature emerged violently and brought her to betray her husband.

Other examples from the Alfonsine chronicles suggest that appellations such as *amigo/a* often conveyed explicit or implicit sexual connotations. This was the case of King Bermudo II (r.985–99), who had both legitimate wives and concubines.<sup>33</sup> The fact that he was legally allowed to establish such relationships with his mistresses might justify the fact that such women were defined as *amigas* in both the historical records and in numerous literary narrations. Similarly, in *EE* 847 one can read that Alfonso VI '... ovo este rey don Alffonso v mugieres a bendiciones et dos amigas, segunt cuenta la estoria.'<sup>34</sup> Those two *amigas* – namely Jimena Muñoz and lady Elvira, the latter being Count Raymond de Saint Gille's wife – were honourable women of high lineage. Together with them, his third *amiga*, Zaida – who was said to be the daughter of Abenhabet (al-Mu'tamid b. Abbād, r.1069–91, King of Seville) – was also described with similarly ennobling words: '... mas esta, como quier que lo digan algunos, non fue barragana del rey, mas mugier uelada ...'<sup>35</sup> *EE* 968, about Count Henry of Portugal, who married Teresa, King Alfonso VI's illegitimate daughter, is another interesting example. In fact, Teresa was herself the product of an extra-marital relationship that the King had with the aforementioned Jimena Muñoz, an honourable woman of his court.<sup>36</sup>

There is also evidence to suggest that the terms *amiga/o* were commonly used outside the courtly environment. The formula probably entered the common register as the legacy of widespread poetic *topoi* (for example, *CSM* 94, 104 and 285), even though in such cases the same title implied two substantially different

<sup>32</sup> King Bermudo had two women of high lineage as his mistresses. *EE* 732.

<sup>33</sup> *EE* 746.

<sup>34</sup> '... According to the chronicles, King Alfonso V had legitimate wives and two mistresses'. *EE* 847.

<sup>35</sup> '... But this woman, as somebody argued, was not the king's mistress, but his secret wife ...' *EE* 847. On the figure of the Muslim Zaida see Évariste Lévi-Provençal, 'La "Mora Zaida" femme d'Alphonse VI et leur fils l'Infant Don Sancho', *Hesperis*, 18 (1934): pp. 1–8.

<sup>36</sup> *EE* 969.



meanings. First, the term was adopted to define the protagonists of immoral or illegitimate relationships, as in *CSM* 55, which described the dissolute affair between a nun and the abbot who took her as his paramour:

... que sse foi con un abade,  
que a por amiga teve | un mui gran tenp' en Lisbõa.<sup>37</sup>

[ ... she ran away with an abbot,  
who kept her as his paramour for a long time in Lisbon.]

Second, and contrarily, the definition appeared to designate the protagonists of any legitimate marital relationship and, above all, to define both parties once their mutual loyalty was proved to each other. This second corollary is clearly illustrated in *CSM* 64, in which a nobleman's wife, who was left alone by her husband when he was called to military service, resisted a knight's attempt to seduce her, supported and protected by the Virgin Mary. For her proven loyalty and nobility of soul, the woman deserved the benevolent title of *amiga* (alternated with the courtly title of *dona*) from her husband.<sup>38</sup>

*CSM* 344 confirms this point. The protagonist of the poem is a malevolent and treacherous lady who tried to poison her husband. If the argument about the peculiar adoption of the lexicon of friendship is correct, it may be expected here that the lady should not be named *amiga*, since she was neither a paramour, linked to her partner by a sensual relationship, nor a loyal and trustworthy advisor. In fact, throughout the entire *cantiga* the appellation adopted to define her is *companna*. The reasons for this might be that she was not a concubine (in fact, she occupied a legitimate position at her husband's side) but, at the same time, she did not possess any of the moral virtues that she needed to be regarded as a loyal and trustworthy friend.

Except for the link based on benevolence and *dilectio* between two people, the terms *amigo/a* recur in the Alfonsine production to indicate spiritual lovers, such as the Virgin Mary (defined as both Christ's and her believers' friend); legitimate consorts; as well as any paramours or partners with whom one was legitimately linked. The fact that the same lexicon was adopted to define different typologies of relationships does not imply any real homologation

<sup>37</sup> *CSM* 55, lines 17–18.

<sup>38</sup> The English translation by Kulp-Hill alternates terms such as 'my lady' and 'my dear', remarking in such a way the fact that, in the modern perception and vocabulary, the title of friend has partially lost the multifarious range of meanings which it conveyed in the Middle Ages.



among them. Contrarily, as this study has tried to point out, such varieties and coincidences should be regarded as the legacy of a widespread literary tradition, which made separated fields and relationships converge into the same, at least semantic, melting pot.

### Other Friendships: The Case of Tutors

In the Alfonsine works tutors are frequently defined as friends of both those who entitled them with tutorial duties and those who received their pastoral support. *EE* 361, drawing on the *Chronicle* by Sigebert of Gembloux, narrates the story of the Eastern Emperor Arcadius (d.408 AD), who chose a tutor for his child, Theodosius II (d.450 AD), when he was only eight years old. The chosen tutor was the powerful Yazdegerd I (r.399–420 AD), King of Persia, who

... recibio la guarda del ninno bien cuemo leal amigo, et puso sus pazes muy firmes con los romanos et ayudol a mantener ell imperio.<sup>39</sup>

[... as a loyal friend, he received the commitment of tutorship of the child and he established an alliance with the Romans, and he helped them to maintain their Empire.]

By accepting such a role, the King of Persia also established a pact of friendship with the Roman emperor who had appointed him. Tutorship frequently engendered strong links between families and groups, which also implied political and military commitments. In the specific case of *EE* 361, the tutor Yazdegerd, defined as a good friend by both Arcadius and the young Theodosius, was endowed with moral virtues and strength, which made him a model for the young child to emulate. According to the chronicle, since Yazdegerd was not corrupted by personal ambition and thirst for power, he was able to behave honestly towards his pupil, as well as towards the imperial family who had entrusted him with this appointment.

There were also cases in which tutorship replaced parenthood. This is evident from *EE* 784, which recounts the story of Sancho García, who recurred to the protection of a man who behaved as his tutor once both his parents died during a Muslim attack:

<sup>39</sup> *EE* 361.

Como era omne poderoso et sesudo, conseiaual siempre que punnasse en fazer grandes fechos, et ayudaual el en ello quando podic a guisa de omne leal.<sup>40</sup>

[Since he was a strong and wise man, he always advised him to put his effort in trying to pursue great deeds, and he personally helped him to achieve them, as a loyal friend.]

Moreover, as suggested by *EE* 804, tutors should be also skilful political advisors, whose recommendations would prevent crisis and disorder. The chronicle describes the conflict between King Ferdinand I of León (r.1037–65) and his brother García Sánchez III of Pamplona (r.1035–54), since the latter did not grant any of the expected rewards to his knights, causing, in this way, their rebellion and disloyalty. García Sánchez's tutor, advising him loyally and honestly managed to prevent further damage.<sup>41</sup>

However, as for any other kind of friendship, corruption and vices could undermine the stability of those bonds, above all when material benefits were at stake. *EE* 178 speaks for itself: '... una uez auino que un omne bueno a su muerte dexo su fijo pequenno en guarda de un so amigo'.<sup>42</sup> The trust and loyalty that the child's father had for the tutor were not mutual. By contrast, the other '... omne malo, con cobdicia de heredar lo suyo, matolo a pozon'.<sup>43</sup>

In this context, gender issues also deserve some attention. Only a few female figures occupied the role of tutors and, among them, only a few were described positively. One of such rare instances appears in *EE* 1047, the protagonist of which is Queen Berengaria (named Berenguela in the chronicle), Ferdinand III's mother, portrayed as her son's trustworthy guide, tutor and wise counsellor. The blood tie connecting Berengaria to Ferdinand reflects the pragmatic effect of the law, which banned women from being named guardians for any children, unless they were their mothers or grandmothers. Another condition imposed by the law was that women had to prove their virtues and loyalty before being entrusted with any type of pastoral duties. Women were not allowed to get married while they were in charge of a child (*SP* VI:XVI:IV); and for the same

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<sup>40</sup> *EE* 784.

<sup>41</sup> The tutor who raised King García of Navarre was a very good, loyal and honourable man, and when he realized how the situation would evolve, he advised King García, his lord, crying loud ... *EE* 804.

<sup>42</sup> ... It happened once that a good man, before he died, left his young son under the tutorship of a friend of his. *EE* 178.

<sup>43</sup> ... the evil man, pushed by his avarice to inherit the other's patrimony, poisoned him. *EE* 178.

reason widows were not allowed to be appointed as guardians for their own children (*SP* VI:XVI:VI). More generally, the law forbade any types of female tutorship: 'Muger ... no puede entrar fiador por otri'.<sup>44</sup>

Tutorship resembled friendship in numerous aspects, at least as far as duties and moral requirements were concerned. For this reason, warnings and prohibitions directed to both tutors and friends were mainly the same. In particular, both legal treatises and didactic collections warned about avoiding the dangers of human vices and emphasized the indispensability of testing the counterparts' loyalty and virtues. Whenever those parameters were met, the language of friendship appeared. Moreover, the presence of lexical similarities could either highlight or shade points of convergence and structural differences between relationships of tutorship and friendship.

### Friendship and Companionship: Lexical Similarities and Practical Differences

There are plentiful indications to prove that there were specific cases of relationships in which the vocabulary of friendship was replaced by similar, but not identical, definitions, among which that of companionship. The variety of connections accommodated within this last category included communities of individuals sharing the same social status; associations of people working together, sharing activities and responsibility in the same fields; affiliations based on commercial and economic agreements and, no less importantly, memberships to the same familial groups and households.

Friendly agreements defined as *compannas* and characterized by commercial and economic interests also fit this category.<sup>45</sup> As remarked upon in the *SP*, individuals associated by commercial activities were named companions both juridically and customarily, and their commitments consisted of sharing the benefits and responsibilities generated by their lucrative activities. The law forbade them to be witnesses for each other in a trial, since their testimony

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<sup>44</sup> Women ... cannot be tutors of other persons. *SP* V:XII:III, See also *SP* V:XVI:I, as well as Magdalena Rodríguez Gil, 'Las posibilidades de actuación jurídico-privadas de la mujer soltera medieval', in *La condición de la mujer*, ed. Yves-René Fonquerne and Alfonso Esteban (Madrid: Casa de Velásquez, Universidad Complutense, 1986), pp. 107–20.

<sup>45</sup> See for example *CSM* 116, lines 9–13.

would be influenced (and probably corrupted) by the interests that they shared and that they would naturally seek to preserve.<sup>46</sup>

The norms regulating these companionships, based on pragmatic interests, echoed the moral rules on which any other form of friendship had to be entrenched; above all loyalty and equal sharing:

Compañías facen los homes unos con otros para ganar algo de so uno ... en la qual compañía metió cada uno dellos mill maravedis alfonsis, con los quales prometieron entre sí el uno al otro de facer esta mercaderia bien et lealmente, et de compartir entre sí toda ganancia, ó daño ó pérdida que hobiese por razon desta mercaderia.<sup>47</sup>

[Men form partnerships with one another for mutual profit ... and into the said partnership each of them puts one thousand Alfonsine *maravedis*, with which each one promises to the other to conduct said business well and faithfully, and to share all the profits, injury, or loss, which they may have by reason of said business.]

The rules concerning the inheritance of friendship were also, though partially, evoked in the norms regulating economic and financial agreements. The law established, for example, that patrimonies should be shared between those who were bond in a partnership (*SP III:XXII:XXI*) and between their respective heirs.

Overall, the abstract principles ruling personal friendships were embodied and had their practical development in those commercial partnerships. In other words, while the former were links built on a nobler and more abstract idea of individuals sharing the same soul, the latter implied their concrete co-participation in acquiring goods and bearing duties:

Otrosi decimos que quando facen los homes compañías entre sí poniendo que todos los bienes que han ó ganaren dende adelante que sean comunalmiente de todos los compañeros, que luego que tal compañía hayan fecha, et firmada et

<sup>46</sup> *SP III:XVI:XXI*, 'when those who are partners in trade or in any other transaction, have a suit in court concerning the business in which they are associated, the testimony of either in behalf of the other shall not be admitted, for the reason that the gain or loss of said case interests each one of them according to the amount of his share. However, in any other suit which does not concern them all in common, one can testify on behalf of another, although they may be partners and friends'.

<sup>47</sup> *SP III:XVIII:LXXXVIII*.

otorgada entre sí, que pasa el señorío de todas las cosas que cada uno de ellos ha á los otros, tambien como si unos á otros se hobiesen apoderado en todos los bienes que hobiesen corporalmente.<sup>48</sup>

[We also decree that when men form partnership with one another, by agreeing that all the property which they have now, or may afterwards acquire, shall belong in common to all the partners; and as soon as such partnership has been formed, concluded, and agreed upon among them, the ownership of all the property which each of them has passes to the others, just as if some of them had placed the others actually in possession of everything which they owned.]

Even in cases of commercial cooperation, as for any other form of friendship, loyalty and honesty had to be tested carefully.

With regard to this aspect, *SP V*, which deals with maritime law, categorizes the same legal and moral norms of co-participation in terms of debts and loss. In this case, however, the association of merchants is defined as ‘... confradía de consuno que se ayuden unos á otros ...’<sup>49</sup> Despite these ennobling titles, these types of relationships were generally established to make a profit:

Compañía es ayuntamiento de dos homes ó de mas que es fecha con entencion de ganar de so uno, ayuntándose los unos á los otros, et nasce ende grant pro quando se face entre homes bonos et leales; ca se ayudan et se acorren los unos á los otros, bien asi como si fuesen hermanos.<sup>50</sup>

[A partnership is the association of two or more men formed with the intention of common profit by the union of all parties. Great advantages arise from it when it is formed between good and faithful men, for they aid one another as if they were brothers.]

Similar to the cases of more personal and genuine friendships, lucrative bonds also required mutual loyalty and respect of the terms established by an agreement. In fact, as long as these requirements were fulfilled, even commercial partnerships assumed strong moral connotations to the point of being compared (at least by definition) with brotherhoods.

<sup>48</sup> *SP III:XXVIII: XLVII.*

<sup>49</sup> [... brotherhood for the purpose of aiding one another ...] *SP V:VII:II.*

<sup>50</sup> *SP V:X:I.*

Apart from the economic connotation of *companna*, in the Alfonsine collections the term also defined other groups, such as pilgrims sharing the same faith and beliefs, who gathered together to go to the shrines of saints, the Virgin or to the Holy Land.<sup>51</sup> Particularly interesting is CSM 355, which narrates the story of a lady who was rejected by the knight whom she loved, since he preferred to devote himself to the Virgin Mary. In an attempt to convince him, the lady proposed to join him on his pilgrimage to Villasilva. Her ambiguous words suggest that she might have offered him both her sexual favours (*amor*) and her company (*companna*) during the journey.<sup>52</sup>

Alongside these types of *compannas*, there were other cases in which the protagonists forged a bond to commit some misdeeds and illegal actions. In these cases the definition of friendship never appears. By contrast, the most frequently adopted term is companionship.<sup>53</sup> In fact, since the companions who collaborated in committing malevolent actions were usually guided by avarice and lust, they could not be regarded as, and therefore named, friends. An example is CSM 106, about two squires who attempted a robbery before being discovered and imprisoned. Since their relationship was based neither on admirable feelings nor on mutual love, but developed from their complicity in committing a crime, they never addressed each other as friends, but simply as *compannon*.

Of interest is also CSM 194, recounting the miracle of a minstrel, whose clothes and donkey made the knight, who owned the lands that the minstrel was crossing, greedy and jealous. The knight ordered one of his men to go and catch the minstrel, and so the evil man did 'e dessa natura mesma | levou sig' un companheiro'.<sup>54</sup> Significantly, the wicked man never addressed the other as friend. This lexical choice might be explained by the lack of any feeling of loyalty, love and respect between the two collaborators, whose union was based on their selfish attempt to obtain the material rewards which the knight would pay for their illicit services. Another example of men collaborating on the basis of lucrative and immoral desires is CSM 245, about the miracle which happened in São Salvador da Torre, where the castellan of Neiva with his vile company imprisoned and tormented a traveller from whom they wanted to steal money and goods. What is striking is that not only did the evil *companna* seek to pursue their project of robbery, but they misbehaved intentionally in order to defend

<sup>51</sup> CSM 26, 49, 57, 224, 217, 268, 302, 311, 319 are just a few examples.

<sup>52</sup> See for example CSM 355, lines 40–41.

<sup>53</sup> For example, in EE 183 a group of thieves are named *companna de ladrones* (company of thieves).

<sup>54</sup> He took a companion of the same ilk with him. CSM 194, line 20.

their reputations as evil-doers, which they wanted to maintain in the eyes of the other corrupted men of Portugal.

Following the same line of thought, *CSM* 125 tells of a priest who fell in love with a young woman, but she refused his shameful love, protected by the Virgin Mary. Driven by despair and passion, the priest summoned the devil and asked for his aid. The image of the devil described as the worst company that a man might find was a widespread literary *topos*, which also appeared in *CSM* 201 and 411. Insidious satanic plots would also cause the end of different types of friendships, alliances and agreements:

el Diabolo ... sembro la su mala semient et negra en el regno de Espanna, e metio en los poderosos soberuia, e en los religiosos pereza et negligencia, e entre los que auien paz et amor discordia ...<sup>55</sup>

[The devil ... sowed his bad and black seeds in the kingdom of Spain, and he put arrogance in those who were powerful, laziness and negligence in the clergymen, and enmity between those who lived in love and peace ...]

With this in mind, it is surprising that the priest of *CSM* 125 addresses the devil as 'amigo meu' ('my friend'). As contradictory as this might seem, the adoption of such an epithet might have two possible explanations. Perhaps the most plausible interpretation is that the priest might have used this title as a mere formula of *captatio benevolentiae*. An alternative, though weaker, explanation is that the priest was honestly unaware of the dangerous implications of his lustful love and, consequently, he truly believed that the devil, as the only one willing to help him, was behaving as a loyal friend.

Finally, two more examples from the *EE* might help drawing a sharp-line of separation between the definitions of companionship and friendship. *EE* 777 describes how, at the time of Alfonso V of León (r.999–1027), the Muslim King of Seville, Sulayman II ibn al-Hakam (r.1009–16), moved to Córdoba, where in 1009 he faced a revolt led by the inhabitants of the city, who marshalled their forces against him, as he had been unable to protect them from Berber raids: 'Los fijos salieron estonces a ell con unos pocos de sus amigos, et dixeronle todo el fecho de los de la çibdad.'<sup>56</sup> The question is why the military host surrounding the King's sons are here indicated as *amigos* rather than – as expected for a

<sup>55</sup> *EE* 551.

<sup>56</sup> His sons came to him with a few friends, and told him what was happening in the city. *EE* 777.



military group – as *companna*. Admittedly, the so-termed *amigos* were nobles, vassals and wise counsellors; that is to say allies whose political skills and social positions tied them within a much more complex network of relationships, some of which allowed them to be regarded and named as friends.

Last but not least, *EE* 4 is particularly thought-provoking. According to the Alfonsine chronicle, the toponym of the Persian city, Phoenix, was related to the bird's name and it was justified by the fact that both the city and the bird were regarded as unique: 'ell ave fenix que es sola e no a compannera'.<sup>57</sup> The statement that the bird has no *compannera* suggests that no other animal is comparable or could even be considered equal in value. Although lacking any direct connection to the sphere of human relationships, this is a lexical nuance which adds further support to the argument that, at least from a merely linguistic point of view, the definition of *compannero* always implied some form of equality among individuals sharing peer conditions, as well as similar attitudes, social or economic backgrounds. By contrast, the terminology of friendship was adopted when referring to an abstract and more complicated concept of equality, which was enhanced to include shared virtues and, as promoted by the influent Christian doctrine, a form of equality which might be achieved in the name of God.

Spiritual, religious, political, military and commercial agreements; marital and extra-marital bonds; sensual and sexual relationships; cases of tutorship; different types of brotherhoods and criminal organizations, all contributed to enhance the kaleidoscope of meanings and typologies of friendship. In all likelihood, they mirrored thirteenth-century attitudes and practices, most of which reflected the cultural legacy of shared peninsular traditions, as well as of other Mediterranean and Western European contexts.

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<sup>57</sup> The bird phoenix, which is unique and has got no companions/equals. *EE* 4.

# Conclusion

Thirteenth-century Iberian experiences, descriptions and regulations of friendship find a synthesis in the works promoted and supervised by Alfonso X of Castile, one of the most enlightened rulers of his time. Friendship was presented as a sort of living entity, born between certain individuals or groups and subject to specific developments under determined circumstances. Yet, for that same nature, friendship was destined to perish; particularly when the original motivations and interests binding the involved parties were either satisfied or expired.

Despite the cultural similarities with other contemporary European contexts, the Iberian interpretations of friendship presented some original aspects. First of all, the undisputed superiority attributed to relationships based on blood ties and kinship, praised already by some of the ancient Greek and Near Eastern thinkers, was radically subverted in the Alfonsine perspective, according to which blood ties did not represent a guarantee of loyalty and respect, at least until a concrete proof of friendship was delivered. Second, renewed emphasis was placed on loyalty, respect, keeping secrets and mutual sharing of love and responsibilities (including the defence and protection of a friend's person, fame and honour), which were regarded as the undisputed bases on which any amicable relationships should be established. In some cases, friendship enhanced existing networks of power and defined alternative or complementary pragmatic links, which went beyond some of the most traditional social and political patterns, which were already quite distinctive in the Iberian context.<sup>1</sup> The thirteenth century was also a period in which sovereigns from all over Europe sought to legitimize their claims of centralized authority, which in practical terms needed a broader network of support among their subjects.

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<sup>1</sup> See for example A. Malpica and T. Quesada, ed., *Los orígenes del feudalismo en el mundo mediterráneo*, 2nd edn (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1998); Abilio Barbero and Marcelo Vigil, *La formación del feudalismo en la Península Ibérica* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1978); Hilda Grassotti, *Las instituciones feudo-vasalláticas en León y Castilla* (2 vols, Spoleto: Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 1969); Luis García de Valdeavellano, 'Sobre la cuestión del feudalismo hispánico', in *El feudalismo hispánico y otros estudios de historia medieval* (Barcelona: Ariel, 1981), pp. 7–62. For more on this topic see Chapter 4, pp. 128–31, 133–34.

The idea of equality is also a recurrent *topos* used with a number of variants. Friendships between individuals belonging to different social groups or having different ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds were extremely rare and when they occurred, they generally implied the submission of one of the parties to another. In fact, most of those relationships, although labelled as friendships, often resembled the characteristics of vassallic bonds generated within a rigid pyramidal structure. Significantly, the possibility of exchanging mutual favours and love between individuals endowed with noble virtues, but of unequal social positions, was never denied completely. There were instances in which the gap existing between those individuals or groups could be overcome and that occurred when equality was experienced, or claimed, either in terms of virtues or in the name of a shared religious devotion. The other *sine qua non* conditions for such bonds to be established were mutual respect and loyalty. Friendship had to be deserved and earned by everybody, including the most powerful and highly-positioned members of both the ecclesiastical and lay elites, as well as by any supernatural figures (including saints, angels and other divine intermediaries, as evident from the miracle stories of the *Cantigas de Santa María*), who had to behave righteously and benevolently towards their subordinates in order to receive their benevolence, loyalty and friendship in return.

Despite the adoption of an emotional language, it is nearly impossible to establish whether there were any genuine feelings behind the establishment of most bonds of friendship in both secular and ecclesiastical contexts. Friendship was frequently the end product of a process of networking involving individuals and entire communities, and in numerous cases it also represented the first step towards the achievement of more ambitious goals. Political alliances, diplomatic treaties and agreements of peace are cases in point: declaredly based on loyalty and trust, they were actually established in order to obtain protection, military and material support, as well as defence from internal and external enemies. In most cases, the king embodied the focal point of such connections. Perhaps for this reason, monarchs were the major addressees of a number of didactic norms which reminded them never to trust a person as a friend before testing their loyalty.

The case of Iberia is particularly fascinating for the numerous examples of individuals belonging to different ethnic and religious groups who behaved and interacted between them and within their own communities according to specific rules established either legally or customarily. The Alfonsine law, for example, was explicit about the behaviour that Christians, Muslims, Jews and heretics had to adopt and how contacts and exchanges with and among them had to be managed. Although conditions were in most cases very strict and co-operation

was either completely denied (as for the case of heretics) or controlled by heavy restrictions, there were some exceptions. In fact, whenever the contractors were rulers or members of the highest elites, they were – officially or not is another story – allowed some space for alternative manoeuvres. An instance of this is that not only were friendships with Muslim rulers officially agreed, but in some cases they proved to be even more efficient, beneficial and reliable than pacts established with other Christians.

This calls to mind modern sociological approaches, according to which social interactions are based on trust, which is partially the result of traditions and collective memories, which help define boundaries and identities.<sup>2</sup> But trust also, and deeply, relies on *habita*; something enrooted in individual communities and supported by historical contingencies, therefore changeable in time and place. Similarly, the attempt of a medieval Christian ruler – Alfonso X – to define social boundaries through collective religious and historical memories clashed with complex routines and practices, which were the results of parallel networks of daily co-operation, confrontation and exchanges experienced within and between different devotional and ethnic communities. To what extent those, in principle incompatible, systems of social cohesion dialogued and interacted between them is a question open to further investigation. However, I do believe that the fundamental rules of friendship, especially loyalty, defence of the other and respect of the norms established by an agreement, provide some potential answers, since connections shaped by those parameters represented a bridge between the two aforementioned systems. Moreover, the tension between historical memory and daily practices is confirmed by the fact that the predicament of the law did not always coincide with the practice. In the specific case of the *Siete Partidas* this is even more evident because this *corpus* was not issued until the following century, while the local *fueros* and other customary rules simultaneously regulated and recorded (perhaps more faithfully) daily standards of social interactions.

Not surprisingly, the majority of the relationships labelled as friendship, including interfaith connections, were the result of strategic thinking and

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<sup>2</sup> Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990). On the importance of trust from a sociological perspective see for example Russel Hardin, *Trust and Trustworthiness* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 2002); *Trust in Society*, ed. Karen S. Cook (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 2001); Piotr Sztompka, *Trust: A Sociological Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1995); Niklas Luhmann, *Trust* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1979); Misztal, *Trust in Modern Societies*.

pragmatic reasoning, although some of them were described as instances of exemplary moral behaviour. While in classical thought any real friendship was based on the 'good', that is to say it could flourish every time that two noble souls met, independently from external factors, such as age or class distinction, in the Alfonsine perspective numerous variants appear. Moral virtues were regarded as fundamental parameters to identify friends, but individuals stereotypically regarded as evil-doers and traitors – especially Jews – were excluded *a priori* from occupying such positions. This was also the case for most women, rarely accepted as companions and friends, except when they were related by familial ties to their counterparts or when they managed to demonstrate their goodwill in time and with exemplary deeds. Generally, and more frequently, the failure of an amicable relationship was attributed to the disloyalty committed by those who, at least verbally, professed to be genuine friends.

Another interesting element to point out is that the vocabulary of friendship was also used to designate lovers, paramours and legitimate partners. This has been explained as the result of a literary and ideological process according to which the concepts of love and friendship had traditionally coincided. Yet, a new awareness appeared in Alfonso X's works, since even in cases of concubinage and sexual bonds, the terms *amigo/a* were used only if and when the partners behaved loyally to each other or when the relationship between them was legitimized either through secular or religious laws.

The title of friend, and more generally the language of friendship, were also manipulated to ennoble different, and sometimes controversial, forms of social and personal exchange. The appellation of friends defined those directly involved in an amicable relationship, as well as those who acted as intermediaries between individuals who occupied unequal roles and functions within a rigid hierarchical system. The lexical choices adopted to define different types of links are significant to recognize such a range of semantic nuances and to support the argument that Alfonso X must have been aware of such differences, despite the fact that most of those relationships presented blurred lines of separation. For example, the vocabulary of brotherhood was adopted when equal conditions were experienced. By contrast, terms such as *amigo* and *compañero* were used interchangeably whenever there was some kind of recognizable social ranking between the contractors. Nonetheless, despite their frequent overlap, *amicitia* referred to relationships between individuals endowed with praiseworthy spiritual and moral characteristics, while *compaña* applied to bonds generated by pragmatic needs, in some cases even aimed at fulfilling malevolent plans.

Like other medieval rulers, Alfonso X skilfully adopted rhetorical strategies as demagogic tools to address his followers and army. However, the title of

friend – in some instances even more valuable than a mere military recognition – was dispensed wisely and was awarded to those who fulfilled their vassalic duties loyally and righteously. Therefore, in the hierarchy of virtues required to be both eligible as, and able to recognize, a friend, wisdom stood at the top, overshadowing both feelings and emotions.

It is important to point out that the interpretations of friendship in the Alfonsine works were multiple and sometimes controversial. However, even if categories and typologies frequently overlapped, such as the figures or friends, counsellors and companions, or cases of religious, political and military friendships, their constitutive elements remained the same, as well as the threats which undermined them. Emotional connections could exist alongside the economic, political and legal structures within which individuals and communities found protection, as well as material, spiritual and personal support. Moreover, there were circumstances in which diversity and 'otherness' did not establish rigid lines of separation, but they rather constituted flexible patterns to define either conflictive or compatible identities, to recognize companions and loyal friends and, consequently, to exclude potential or real enemies. Additionally, the fact that boundaries between individual and public experiences of friendships were not always rigidly set might also explain the existence of such a plethora of definitions and representations.

Significantly, friendship was treated as a relevant subject to discuss and celebrate in the historiographical, literary and even legal production of a growing kingdom – that of Castile – the political and social stability of which had to be strengthened and preserved through multiple means of legitimization. Literary *topoi* and rhetorical structures, very similar to those recognizable in other European neighbouring areas, might have provided some of those tools to a ruler who claimed, but never achieved, the title of Holy Roman Emperor and aimed at positioning himself and his kingdom within the broader Western European and Mediterranean contexts. Confirming his well-deserved title of 'the Wise', Alfonso X would neither ignore nor underplay peninsular peculiarities, which reflected the existence of multiple and varied 'emotional communities' – to recall Rosenwein's definition – in daily life, which were structured around costumes and practices dictated by habit, acculturation and pragmatic choices.<sup>3</sup> I believe that this study adds another piece to the reconstruction of the cultural and emotional landscape of medieval Iberia; a complex reality which was simultaneously the receptacle and the springboard

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<sup>3</sup> Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

of different ideas, traditions and customs. Moreover, the study of friendship in the Iberian context enhances our understanding of the essential nature of the wider Western Mediterranean world, which was politically, culturally and socially shaped through contacts and networks of different types.

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# Index

- ‘Abd Allāh, King of Granada (r.1073–90)  
     153  
 Aben Yuzaf, *see* Abū Yūsuf  
 Abengalvón 155–58  
 Abenhabet, King of Córdoba and Seville  
     189  
 Abenragel, *see* Alī ibn ‘Abī-l-Rijāl  
 Abenrodianus, *see* Alī ibn Ridwān  
 Aboeça Abenlupon 147  
 Abū Yūsuf, King of Morocco (r.1258–86)  
     110  
 advice and advisors, *see* counsellors  
 Aelred of Rievaulx 19, 81  
*affectus*, concept of 90  
*agape*, concept of 18  
 Al-Andalus 139, 144  
 Al-Mamūn, King of Toledo (r.1043–75)  
     140–43  
 Al-Mansur 31, 182  
 Al-Mutamid, King of Seville (r.1069–91)  
     153  
 Al-Qādir, ruler of Valencia (r.1075–85)  
     147  
 Alcanate 166  
 Alcira 85  
 Alexander the Great 12, 39, 61  
 Alfonso I, King of Aragon and Navarre  
     (r.1104–34) 100  
 Alfonso II, King of Aragon, ‘The Chaste’  
     (r.1164–96) 183  
 Alfonso III, King of Asturias, ‘El Magno’  
     (r.866–910) 140  
 Alfonso III, King of Portugal (r.1248–79)  
     41–2, 54  
 Alfonso VI, King of León and Castile  
     (r.1065–1109) 49, 100, 140–44,  
     150, 152–55, 159, 163–64, 189  
 Alfonso VII, King of León and Castile  
     (r.1126–57) 100, 132–33  
 Alfonso VIII, King of Castile  
     (r.1158–1214) 41, 86, 120, 126,  
     136, 144  
 Alfonso IX, King of León and Galicia  
     (r.1188–1230) 47, 127, 136  
 Alfonso X, King of Castile (r.1252–84),  
     politics, life events and cultural  
     achievements 3–7, 20, 30, 41–80,  
     87–88, 107–10, 113, 117–18, 123,  
     127, 133, 144–45, 161, 166–67, 169,  
     171–72, 174–75, 184, 199–203  
 Alfonso XI, King of Castile (r.1313–50)  
     66, 69  
*alguazil mayor* 147  
 Alī ibn ‘Abī-l-Rijāl 53  
 Alī ibn Ridwān 53  
 Alighieri, Dante 52, 81–82  
 alliance 6, 20, 28–29, 42, 83, 88, 90, 98,  
     100, 105–7, 110, 113–15, 119, 124,  
     128, 131–35, 139–76, 178, 191,  
     197, 200  
 Almanzor, *see* Al-Mansur  
 Alphonsi, Petrus 73  
 Álvaro Fáñez (Minaya) 155  
 Álvaro Pérez 185–86  
*amare*, *see* love  
 Ambrose, St 18, 177  
*Ami et Amile*, legend of 25–26  
*amicitia* 1–3, 5–6, 9–10, 12, 14, 17–20,  
     24, 26–29, 30, 34–37, 70–80, 95,  
     99, 110, 112–15, 118–19, 124,  
     128–30, 134, 136, 140, 157, 159,  
     178, 202  
*spiritualis amicitia* 81; *see also*  
     friendship



- amiga/o*, 5, 27, 30–32, 36, 38, 55, 71–79, 93, 95, 98–99, 101, 120, 122, 124–25, 127, 131–32, 136, 141, 146, 153, 155, 157, 163, 168, 171, 173, 177–98, 202
- amistad*, *see amicitia*
- amity, *see amicitia*
- amiztat*, *see amicitia*
- amor/amour*, *see love*
- Andalusia (Southern Iberian territories) 4, 42–43, 48–50, 85–86, 116, 118, 153
- angels 53, 165, 200
- Anselm, St 19, 26
- Antoninus Pius, Emperor (d.161 AD) 120
- Aquinas, Thomas 19–20, 81
- Arcadius, Eastern Roman Emperor (d.408 AD) 191
- Argentina, Countess 187–88
- Aristotle 1, 9, 19–20, 39, 71–72, 75, 79, 111–13
- Ethica Eudemea*, *Ethica Nicomachea* 14–16
- Rhetoric* 14–16
- Arjona 185
- astrology 35–36, 50, 52–53
- Augustine of Hippo, St 18, 77, 82
- Bandino di Guido Lancia 44
- Barcelona 153
- Basil, St 99
- Beatriz of Swabia, House of Hohenstaufen 41
- Bede, the Venerable 81
- Benedict, St 83
- benevolentia* 1, 17, 20, 71
- Berceo, Gonzalo de 86–87, 94, 99
- Berengaria of León, Alfonso IX's daughter 136
- Berenguela, *see Berengaria of León*
- Bermudo II, King of León (r.985–99) 189
- Bermudo III, King of León (r.1027–37) 63, 135
- Bernard de Clairvaux, St 26, 84
- Bernard de Sedirac, Archbishop of Toledo (c.1050–1125) 102–3, 163–64
- Bernardo del Carpio 62, 139
- betrayal 17, 35, 78–79, 97, 100, 107, 110, 120–23, 126, 140, 144–45, 151, 154, 158, 165–66, 169, 172, 182, 189; *see also* treachery
- bienquerencia*, *see benevolentia*
- bins homes*, *see buenos omnes*
- Blasquez, Roy 140
- blood ties, *see consanguinity*
- Bonvesin de la Riva 84
- brotherhood 12, 21, 24, 28–29, 52, 88, 90, 93–94, 98, 103–7, 109–10, 116, 132, 169, 181–82, 195, 198, 202
- buen seso*, *see wisdom*
- buenos omnes* 29, 72, 164
- Burgos
- Cathedral 48
- Cortes 43
- Byzantium 84, 171
- Caesar, Emperor (d.44 BC) 125
- Calila et Dimna* 31–39, 51–52
- Calixtus II, Pope 103
- canon law, 65, 67, 87, 96, 109
- cantigas*
- cantigas d'escarnho e de maldizer* 30, 54
- cantigas de amigo* 27, 30, 55
- cantigas de amor* 27, 30, 54–55
- cantigas de loor* 58
- Cantigas de Santa María* 39, 46–47, 55–59, 86–87, 92–94, 98–99, 133, 144, 162, 166–74, 184–85, 189–90, 193, 196–97, 200
- loor* 56–58
- manuscript tradition 58–59
- captatio benevolentiae* 94, 99, 131, 146, 197
- Carmen Campidoctoris* 148
- carnevalesque*, poetry 55
- cartas pueblas* 114
- Castellano drecho*, *see vernacular*
- Castile 4, 29, 41–44, 60, 62–65, 86–87, 100–1, 117–18, 129, 175,

- 199–203; *see also* Alfonso X; kings of Castile
- Catalan pirates 174–75
- chanson de geste* 22
- charity, concept of 19, 89, 103, 125
- Charlemagne 121
- children, 13, 39, 72–73, 83, 100, 168, 173, 179, 183, 191–93
- Chronicon mundi* 63, 141–43
- Chrysippus 16
- Cicero 17–19, 72–73, 77, 112
- Cid, Isaac ben 52
- clients/*clientes*, *see* patronage
- Coincy, Gautier de 84
- community 2, 7, 13
- civic and political 112, 120
  - economic and commercial 23
  - emotional 11, 203
  - ethnic and religious 49, 164, 168–9, 171–2, 174
  - monastic and religious 89, 92–100
- companionship 22–23, 25, 28, 81, 90, 94, 97, 115, 174, 178, 183, 193–98
- companions, *compañera/o*, *compannon*, *companneyra*, *companneira/o* 75, 92, 94, 96, 99, 103, 106, 115–17, 121, 123–26, 146–47, 154, 163, 169, 177, 180, 184–85, 202–3
- concord/*concordia* 1–2, 5, 20, 71–72, 112, 114, 118
- concubinage 179, 183, 189–90, 202
- confradía*, 76, 88, 195
- Confradía de Santa María de España 108–9;
  - see also* brotherhood
- coniuratio*, *see* conspiracy
- Conrad IV, House of Hohenstaufen (r.1250–54) 44
- consanguinity 11–12, 14, 21–24, 80, 115, 179–82, 186, 192, 199
- consejero*, *see* counsellor
- consortium* 29
- conspiracy 24–25, 140, 159
- Constance of Burgundy, Queen (r.1079–93) 163
- Constantine ‘The Great’, Emperor (d.337 AD) 104, 116
- Constantinople, *see* Byzantium
- Consuegra 162
- convenientia*, juridical and administrative concept 5, 115
- conversion, religious 162, 170, 172
- architectural 48, 85
- convivencia* 160–61, 165
- convivium*, *see* ritual
- Córdoba, 197
- mosque of, 85
- Corpus Iuris Civilis* 65
- councillors 25, 31, 33, 35–36, 53, 72, 75, 97–100, 107, 109, 121, 131, 135, 136, 140–42, 146–47, 150, 153, 180, 182, 188, 190, 192, 198, 203
- Crónica de Castilla* 64
- Crónica de Veinte Reyes* 64, 149
- Crónica General* 46, 64,
- Crónica General de 1344* 64
- Crónica General Vulgata* 64
- cuaderna via*, poetic style 86–87
- Dalmatius Caesar (d.337) 116
- De rebus Hispaniae* 63, 118
- De spiritualis amicitia*, *see* Aelred of Rievaulx
- Decius, Emperor (d.251) 115
- defamation, 77, 162, 199
- Denia 155, 159
- desamor* 100, 135; *see also* enmity
- Díaz de Vivar, Rodrigo (El Cid) 6–7, 63, 86, 148–60, 181
- wife and family 153, 155, 180–82
- Diplomatario andaluz* 108–9
- Disciplina Clericalis* 73
- Divine Comedy/Divina Commedia*
- see* Alighieri, Dante
- Domitian, Emperor (d.96 AD) 122
- Egea, Rodrigo 28
- Écija 127
- El Cid, *see* Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar
- Eleanor of Aquitaine 41

- Elvira of Castile, Countess of Toulouse 189
- enmity 33–35, 79, 121, 126–28, 136, 142, 152, 159, 165, 197; *see also* *desamor*
- Epicurus 13
- epistolary exchanges 2, 26, 33, 71
- equality 13, 15, 76–27, 88, 92, 95, 128, 131, 134, 180, 188, 198, 200
- escuela gallego-portuguesa*, *see* Galician-Portuguese
- Espéculo* 65–68
- Estoria de España* 4, 6, 39, 59–64, 73, 103, 106, 114–22, 124–27, 136, 139, 140–43, 145–46, 148–60, 163, 180–82, 185–86, 188–92, 196
- manuscript tradition 63–4
- Estudio e Escuelas Generales de Latin e de Arábigo* 50
- Ethica Eudemea* 14–16; *see also* Aristotle
- Ethica Nicomachea* 14–16; *see also* Aristotle
- Ethics*, *see* Aristotle
- Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX* 18
- Euristeo 182
- excommunication 95, 97, 110, 174
- Extremadura, 43, 65
- Privilegio general de 43*
- familiarior* 142
- fecho del imperio* 4, 42–43
- fecho de allende* 4, 42
- Ferdinand II, King of León (r.1157–88) 120
- Ferdinand III, King of Castile (r.1217–52) 4, 41, 48, 50, 59, 62, 65, 67–68, 85–86, 118, 128, 185, 192,
- Fernán González, Count 62, 101, 127, 145, 180–82, 186–87
- Fernández, Pedro 28
- fief 30, 128–29, 133, 135, 147, 183
- Flavius Dalmatius, *see* Dalmatius Caesar
- Flores de Filosofía* 31–32, 75
- fraternity, *see* brotherhood
- Frederick II, House of House of Hohenstaufen 41, 44, 50
- friendship, *see* *amicitia*
- civic friendship 9, 12–13, 16, 79, 111
- commercial agreements 12, 23, 28, 38, 135, 193–95, 198
- end of 33–34, 74, 78–80, 106–7, 109, 197
- Islamic ideas of 23–24
- proofs of 13, 31, 36, 73–74, 99, 164, 166, 178, 190, 192, 199
- fueros* 114, 201, 43, 64–68
- Fuero Juzgo* 65
- Fuero Real* 65–68, 75
- Fuero Viejo de Castilla* 75–76
- Galaron, *see* Galenon
- Galenon 121
- Galician-Portuguese, language 4, 30, 51, 54–55
- escuela gallego-portuguesa* 54
- Garcí Fernández, Count 187–88
- García, King of Galicia (r.1065–71) 132
- García Fernández, Master of the Order of Alcántara 28, 107
- García Sánchez III, King of Pamplona (r.1035–54) 132–33, 151–52, 192
- Gelmírez, Diego, Archbishop of Santiago de Compostela 100
- General Estoria* 45–47, 59–60
- Ghibellines 44
- gifts 92, 158; *see also* rituals
- Gil Díaz, *alfaquí* of Valencia 181
- Gothic style 48–49
- Granada 110, 144, 153, 171, 185
- Gregory VII, Pope 26, 89
- Gregory X, Pope 44
- Gutierre, Bishop of Córdoba 106
- Hannibal 118, 125
- Hasdrubal 119
- Henry, Count of Portugal 189
- Hercules 61, 182
- heretics 101, 173–76, 200–1
- hermandad*, *see* brotherhood
- Historia Compostellana* 100, 103
- Historia de la doncella Teodor* 31, 33, 37–38
- Historia Roderici* 148–55

- Historia Silense* 143  
*Historia Vandalarum, Alanorum et Silingorum* 63  
*homónoia* 16  
honour 28, 75, 77, 91, 96–97, 100, 102, 117, 120–21, 125–27, 130–31, 142–43, 148, 152, 155–57, 178, 181, 186–89  
Hrabanus Maurus 19  
Ibn al-Ahmar 144  
Ibáñez, Pedro, Master of the Orders of Alcántara and Calatrava 108  
Île-de-France 21  
inheritance of enmity and friendship 22, 126–28, 132, 152, 155, 194  
of property 29, 41, 78, 135, 174, 179, 183  
Isidore of Seville, St 18–19, 83, 89  
Jaime I, *see* James I  
James, St, *see* Santiago  
James I, King of Aragon 41–42, 85, 165–66, 175  
Jerez 85, 166–67  
Jews 49, 93, 101, 123, 144, 160–63, 169–75, 200, 202  
Jiménez de Rada, Rodrigo 63, 118  
John of Salisbury 26  
Julian, Count and Governor of Ceuta 123  
Julian, Emperor (d.363 AD) 99  
kings of Castile  
Alfonso VIII (r.1158–1214) 41, 86, 120, 126, 136, 14  
Alfonso X (r.1252–84) 3–7, 20, 30, 41–80, 87–88, 107–10, 113, 117–18, 123, 127, 133, 144–45, 161, 166–67, 169, 171–72, 174–75, 184, 199–203  
Alfonso XI (r.1313–50) 66, 69  
Ferdinand III (r.1217–52) 4, 41, 48, 50, 59, 62, 65, 67–68, 85–86, 118, 128, 185, 192  
Sancho III (r.1157–58) 126, 132, 135–36  
Sancho IV (r.1284–95) 44, 64, 69, 108–10  
kinship 12, 21–24, 28, 75, 115, 199  
knighthood and knights 29, 55, 63, 76, 86, 105–6, 139–40, 146, 148, 150, 153–58, 163, 190, 192, 196  
*Lapidario* 46, 51, 53  
Lara, family 127–28  
Nuño González de, 127  
*Romance de los siete infantes de Lara* 62, 140  
*Laudes de Virgine Maria* 84  
León, kingdom of, 28–29, 62, 100, 126–27, 129, 135, 142  
cathedral of, 48  
letters, *see* epistolary exchanges  
*Lex Gothica* 64  
Leyes, Jacobo de las 69  
*Liber Razielis* 53  
*Libro de axedrez, dados y tablas* 46, 54  
*Libro de las leyes o Libro del fuero*, *see* *Espéculo*  
*Libro de los engannos et los assayamientos de las mugeres*, *see* *Sendebar*  
*Libro del Ayuntamiento de Pontevedra* 51  
*Libro del saber de astronomía/astrología* 53  
*Llibre dels fets* 165–66  
*loor*, *see* *cantigas*  
love 1–2, 4–5, 7, 12, 14–16, 18–19, 27, 30, 32, 35, 54–55, 70, 75–77, 79, 88, 90, 92, 95, 98, 100, 102–4, 114, 116, 118–20, 124–26, 132, 135, 141, 143, 146, 151, 156–59, 177–82, 186–89, 189–90, 196–97, 199–202  
loyalty 12, 23, 31, 34, 38, 42, 44, 72, 74–79, 93, 100, 103, 107–10, 120–23, 130, 133–35, 141–42, 144, 147, 154–55, 158, 160, 166, 169, 178–80, 183, 185, 187, 190, 192–99, 200–1  
Lucena 122

- Majorca 85, 165  
 Manuel, Juan 45, 64  
 Marianism *see* Mary  
 marriage 76, 134–38, 153, 177–79, 188  
 Martin IV, Pope 110  
 Martínez de Zamora, Fernando 69  
 Martos 185  
 Mary, Virgin 4, 55–56, 69, 83–88, 93–94, 99, 108, 162, 166–69, 171–74, 184, 187, 190, 196–97  
 Marianism 58, 84, 86  
 Mauregatus, King of Asturias (r.783–88) 139, 183  
 Medina Sidonia 49  
*Milagros de Nuestra Señora* 86–7, 99  
 military orders, the 25, 43–44, 49, 104–10  
*Militia Dei*, *see* military orders  
 Minaya, *see* Álvar Fáñez 155  
 miniatures 4, 46–48, 54, 56  
 miracles 4, 56–58, 82–87, 93–94, 98–99, 162, 166–69, 172–74, 196, 200  
*mise-en-abîme* 33, 51–52  
 Molina 155–56  
 Montemolín 109  
 Moses-ha-Cohen, Judah ben 52  
 motherhood 21, 84, 168, 179–82, 187, 192  
 Mudejar, revolt (1264), 42–43  
   style 48–49, 167  
 Muhammad, the Prophet 23, 52, 100–1  
 Muhammad I Ibn Nasr, Emir of Granada (r.1238–72) 42  
 Muhammad II, Abū ` Abd Allāh, Emir of Granada (r.1273–1302) 110  
 Muñoz, Jimena 189  
 Murcia 42, 50, 85, 144  
 Murviedro 159  
 music 4, 44, 46–50, 56, 59, 185  
 Muslim 4, 6, 38, 42, 49, 85, 100, 106–7, 116–18, 121, 123, 126–27, 135, 139–76, 174–75, 181–3, 191, 197, 200–1  
   women 168, 185–86, 189  
 mutuality 12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22–23, 25, 28–29, 31, 35–36, 38, 70–71, 77–79, 87–88, 90, 92, 114–15, 119, 130, 133, 141, 144–45, 147, 162, 178, 190, 192, 194–96, 199–200  
 Navarre 29, 86, 101, 126–27, 129  
 Navas de Tolosa, Las, battle of 86, 106  
 Neiva 196  
 Nero, Emperor (d.68 AD) 73, 179  
 networks, social 2, 7, 22, 24–25, 81, 88  
   the case of El Cid 148–60  
 Niebla 144  
 Nuño Rasura 114  
 Nunes, Airas 57  
 Nuñez, Pedro, Master of the Order of Santiago 108–10  
 Ocampo, Florián de 64  
 Odoacer, King of Italy (r.476–93) 124  
 Omar, caliph, *see* Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (r.717–20) 116–17  
 other self 14, 17  
 Ovanos 29  
 Painucio, St 104  
 Palermo 50  
 patronage 3, 7, 17, 44, 48, 50, 88, 108, 113, 118  
 Pedro de Cantabria (d.730) 135  
 Pedro II, King of Aragon (r.1196–1213) 144  
 Pelagius, King of Asturias (r.c.718–37) 85, 135  
 Pelayo, *see* Pelagius  
 Peter of Celle 26  
 Peter the Venerable 26  
*Philia*, *Philos*, *Philo* 6, 12–18  
   *Politiké philia* 16, 112  
 Phytagora 13, 36  
   Pythagorean brotherhoods 12–13  
 pilgrimage 104, 168, 173, 184, 188, 196  
 Pisa, Republic of 44, 68–69  
 Plato 13–15, 35, 111–12  
*Poema de mio Cid* 148–49, 151, 155–57  
 Polis 12  
 Pompey (d.48 BC) 125

- power 24–25, 30–31, 42–44, 48, 62, 66, 68, 71–72, 87–88, 93–96, 107–10, 115–19, 122–24, 128, 130, 133, 135, 140, 142–47, 154, 157–59, 164, 166–67, 169, 178, 182–83, 186, 191, 197, 199–20
- Primera Crónica General* 64
- Privilegio rodado* 107–8, 114
- proof of friendship, *see* friendship
- Pyrenees 87, 118, 121
- Quadrivium, arts of 47
- Las quatro partes enteras de la Crónica de España* 64
- Ramiro II, King of León (r.931–51) 145
- Ramón de Saint Gille, Count 189
- Raymond IV of Toulouse, *see* Ramón de Saint Gille
- Raymond of Burgundy 100
- Reconquista/Reconquest* 4, 48, 62, 64–65, 85, 116
- Rey de Romanos* 42, 44
- rituals 10–11, 23, 27–30, 47, 53, 88, 103–4, 128, 134–38, 162, 164, 173
- convivium*/banquet 23
- gifts 92, 158
- Rocamadour 84, 187
- Roman, history and legacy 5, 61–62, 68, 112–13, 118–25
- ideas of friendship 12, 17–20
- Roy Vela 131
- Saguntum 125
- Sahagún
- Chronicle of Sahagún* 144
- Salamanca, 47, 64
- Salas 168
- Sancha Sánchez de Pamplona, (Fernán González's wife) 101, 180–82, 186–89
- Sancho I, King of Navarre (r.905–25) 127
- Sancho II, King of León (r.1065–72) 132, 142–43, 150–52
- Sancho III, King of Castile (r.1157–58) 126, 132, 135–36
- Sancho III, King of Navarre (r.1004–35) 131, 135
- Sancho IV, King of Castile (r.1284–95) 44, 64, 69, 108–10
- Sancho García of Castile, 126–27, 182, 191
- Santa María de España, *see* *confradía*
- Santa María del Puerto (or do Porto) 85, 166–67, 174
- Santiago (St James) 83
- Santiago de Compostela 173
- Order of Santiago 105, 108–9
- São Salvador da Torre 196
- Saragossa 145, 154–55, 159
- scholasticism 19, 81
- Scipio, brothers 118–19
- scriptorium, Alfonsine 4, 20, 39, 44–45, 50, 52, 54–59, 134, 179
- Scuola Poetica Siciliana* 50
- Secreto de los secretos* 31, 39
- secrets, keeping of 31, 39, 77, 95, 97, 99–101, 117, 120–21, 171, 183, 186, 199
- Sendebat* 52
- Seneca 16–18
- Sergius Galba (r.68–69) 121–22
- Setenario* 68
- Seville 63, 85, 109, 133, 153, 168, 189, 197
- Real Alcázar 49
- Repartimiento de Seville* 50
- sexual relationships 7, 27, 81, 90, 101, 162, 172, 177–98, 202
- Siete Partidas* 1, 3–4, 39, 46–48, 51, 65–80, 82, 87, 89–99, 102, 113, 117, 120–21, 124, 128, 134–35, 145, 171, 178, 183–84, 193–95, 201
- manuscript tradition 69
- Sigebert of Gembloux 191
- Sigüenza, *see* Saguntum
- Silvester, St 98
- Socrates 13, 35
- Song of Roland* 121; *see also* *chanson de geste*
- speculum principis* 31, 36, 39, 51, 117
- Stoics 16–18

- Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik (r.714–17) 116  
 Sulayman II ibn al-Hakam (r.1009–16) 197  
 Sultan of Persia, the Great 157–8
- Tablas Alfonsíes* 52  
 Tajuña, river 140  
 Theoderic the Great, Emperor (r.471–526) 124  
 Theodosius, Emperor (d.395 AD) 191  
 Tiberius, Emperor (d.37 AD) 179  
 Toledo 43, 52, 58, 62, 102–3, 123, 140, 162–64, 169, 185  
     Royal Palace of (Palacio de Galiana) 49  
     school of translation of 49–50  
 Torre Estrella 49  
 Tournai, Stephen 26  
 Trajan, Emperor (d.117 AD) 146  
 Transierra 43  
 translation 3–4, 49–54  
 treachery 121–23, 140, 142, 151, 159, 164, 169, 180, 187; *see also* betrayal  
 treason, *see* betrayal  
 troubadour 48, 63, 196  
     poetry 30, 54–59  
 trust 73–76, 82, 84, 99, 102, 120, 122–23, 136–37, 140–44, 147, 150–51, 155, 161–67, 170–71, 178, 180–86, 189–92, 200–1.
- Tudela 121  
 Tudia 168–69  
 Tuy, Lucas de 63, 94, 121, 131, 141–43  
 tutorship 7, 72, 99, 188, 191–93, 198  
     female tutorship 179–80, 192
- Ubaid Allāh 52  
 Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (r.717–20) 116  
 Urban II, Pope 102  
 Urraca of León and Castile (r.1109–26) 100, 142, 151–52
- Valencia 6, 63, 85–86, 147, 150, 155, 158–59, 181, 185
- vassals and vassalic bonds 6–7, 29–30, 42–43, 70, 88, 94–97, 99, 102–3, 107–8, 125, 128–35, 139, 144–45, 149–51, 153–57, 163–64, 178, 180, 187, 198, 200, 203  
 oath 23–24, 29, 107, 124–25, 128, 130, 133, 135, 139, 141, 143, 145, 147, 163  
 Vela, family 131  
 Vellido Dolfos 151  
 vernacular 4–5, 27, 30, 50–52, 60, 68, 82, 84, 86, 118, 148  
     *Castellano drecho*, definition and debate 50–51  
 Villasilga 196  
 Viriatus, Emperor (d.138 BC) 122  
 Visigoths 47, 62, 64, 123  
 Vitellius, Emperor (d.69 AD) 179  
 Vitry, Jacques de 84
- William II of Holland 44  
 wisdom 13, 29, 45, 70, 72, 79, 99–100, 116, 120, 122–23, 135–36, 140, 151, 164, 166, 180, 182, 188, 192, 198, 203  
     literature 31–33  
 women 27, 39, 55, 58, 93, 177–90, 192–3, 202  
     Muslim 168, 185  
     Jews 172  
     widows 178, 193
- Xenoi* 11
- Yazdegerd I, King of Persia (r.399–420) 191  
 Yazid bin Abd al-Malik (r.720–24) 116  
 Zaida, princess 189  
 Zamora 151  
     *Cortes de Zamora* (1274) 68  
 Zeno 16  
 Zulema, *see* Sulayman ibn Abd al-Malik